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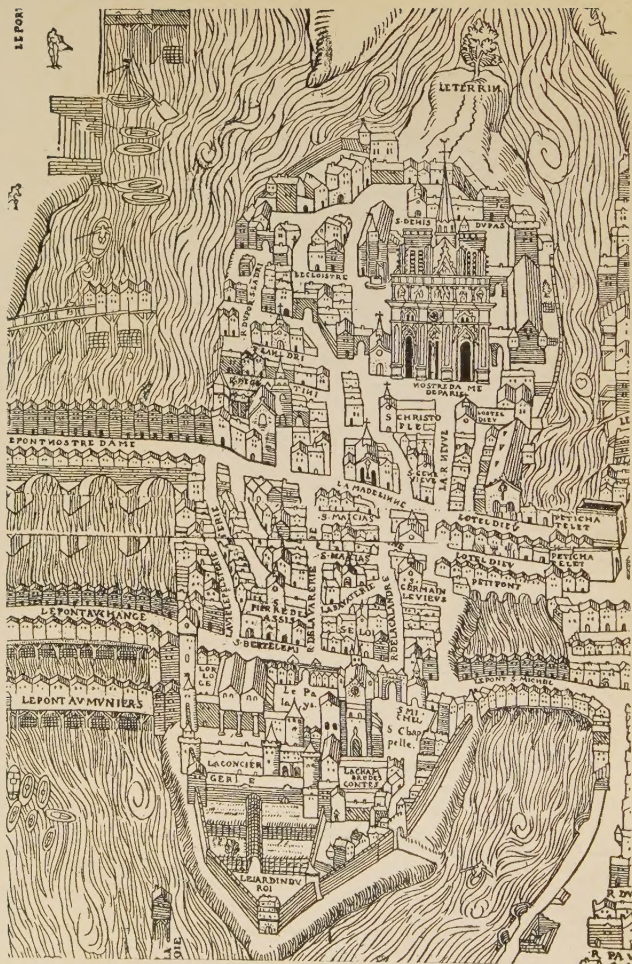
THE ROMANCE OF THE  
PARIS STREETS





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# THE ROMANCE OF THE PARIS STREETS

BY MARY D. STEUART

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## BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

“AUGUSTIN THIERRY calls history a narration, Guizot calls it an analysis; I consider that history should be a resurrection.” This sentence, quoted from Michelet, one of the most brilliant French historians, may be taken, with due humility, for the motto of this modest book, which is intended to help the visitor to Paris, in living over again some of the scenes of the past.

For instance, walking down the Rue Servandoni towards the Luxembourg, the eye will probably be caught by a tablet let into the wall of No. 15. We shall glean from that tablet the information that this was the house in which Condorcet wrote the “*Esquisse des Progrès de l’Esprit Humain*.” “Who was Condorcet? Hadn’t he something to do with philosophy, and those advanced thinkers who helped to set the Revolution going, and wasn’t he the man who lost his life because he didn’t know how many eggs went to make an omelette? At any rate, a sketch of the progress of human nature doesn’t sound very exciting, so let’s go on, and see the Luxembourg.” The criticism is correct; an eighteenth-century philosophical treatise would be dust and ashes to wade through, for most of us. But picture the

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situation to yourself. Try to imagine the proscribed philosopher hidden away in that very ordinary looking house, calmly tracing out the line of human progress, and the glorious future in store; declaring his rooted trust in the essential goodness of mankind, even though the tumbrils, taking their "fournée" for Madame Guillotine, rolled heavily along the street below every day, and even though every step on the stair might be a patrol come to drag him, in his turn, to the scaffold.

Then picture the mistress of the house, Madame Vernet, the sculptor's widow, and her servant, seeing, every time they went out, a bill posted up close to the door, declaring that any persons guilty of giving food or shelter to the proscribed, should themselves suffer the death penalty. Picture this lasting for nine weary months of strain and vigilance. Then, at last, Condorcet's "Esquisse" is finished, and he announces his intention of leaving Madame Vernet's, and taking his chance outside. Neither she nor the servant will hear of such a thing, and they take turns to watch the philosopher's movements. He, on his part, watches theirs, and, seizing his opportunity, slips out into the street, away to the suburbs, and to his death. What a fine piece of drama it is to build up round a tablet in the wall of a house

Of course, if this hypothetical passer-by is well versed in the romance of history already,

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he can re-create the scene for himself, and a book on the subject will be of no use to him, but if, on the other hand, he would know a little more than his "Guide" tells him, then perhaps he may be glad of this book, and it is in this hope that "The Romance of the Paris Streets" has been written.

Beginning with the Rue St. Honoré, as being conveniently near a large number of hotels, it will take the reader across the river by way of the Ile de Cité and Nôtre Dame, down the quays on the south side, and back again from the Invalides to the Jardin des Plantes, with many a turn down byeways and little-known streets in search of this same resurrection of history. Then, back to the north side once more, for more walks, first eastwards, then westwards, until at last it ends at the Cours-de-la-Reine, close to the Place de la Concorde and the Tuileries gardens.

The "sights" of Paris, such as the Louvre, the Cluny, the Jardins des Plantes, the Arc de Triomphe, etc., will be passed over lightly, for their details can be found in Baedeker, or Muirhead, and it is with less familiar scenes that this book is intended to deal chiefly.

With these few paragraphs of explanation, and a last injunction to remember that history is a "resurrection," the writer of the book begs leave to start off with the reader on the first walk, down the Rue St. Honoré.

MARY STEUART.









HENRY IV.

[*l'orbus.*

## CHAPTER I

### THE RUE SAINT HONORÉ

WE will begin our re-creating of the past in this long street, once so important as the principal thoroughfare from east to west, the scene of many an incident of splendour, of brilliance, of terror, or of tragedy, of all that is most magnificent, and all that is most sordid. Just opposite the church of St. Roch was once a tavern, the "Three Pigeons." Here, on a May day in the year 1610, came an unknown man from the country, wishful to see Paris, and, more especially, the King, Henry IV. He heard on the 14th that His Majesty was going that very day to visit old Sully, his great minister, who was lying ill at his hotel in the Rue Saint Antoine. Henry had no great love of state, so that it was merely a big open carriage containing the King, the Ducs de Montbazon and d'Épernon, with two or three gentlemen of the court, that came clattering out through the gateway of the Louvre. The countryman, whose name was Ravailac, stood waiting to see the carriage pass; then, not content with that short glimpse of royalty, he followed it the whole way along the Rue St. Honoré until it turned down what

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is now the Rue des Halles into old Rue de la Ferronnerie. It was a narrow street, so much so that Henry, who loved his Paris, contemplated having it widened, among the improvements that were to be carried out when the money required could be got out of Sully. As likely as not, the papers the King was perusing as he drove along, related to that very subject. It was so narrow, in fact, that some country carts blocked up the street completely, and the royal carriage had to pull up for a minute till they were got out of the way. It was just at this moment that Ravailac, the countryman, seized his opportunity of becoming Ravailac the fanatic and assassin. He sprang up on the spokes of one of the wheels, reached across the back of the carriage, and stabbed Henry twice with a long knife he had stolen from the "Three Pigeons." In a moment all was confusion. The Duc d'Épernon, sitting next the King, noticed nothing till he saw his master fall back, gasping, with blood streaming down on the papers he held in his hand. (It was said afterwards, and may well have been the case, that both the Duc and Marie de Medicis were by no means ignorant of Ravailac's intentions.) Women screamed, windows were flung up, men rushed forward, and in the press the murderer might well have escaped, had he thought of throwing away the blood-stained knife. He was seized and dragged off to prison and torture, while the

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heavy carriage was turned round and driven slowly down the Rue St. Honoré once more, bearing the dead body of one of the best kings that France ever possessed, back to the Louvre again.

It was shortly before these events that Catherine de Vivonne, Marquise de Rambouillet vowed, in utter disgust, that she would never go near the Louvre again. She had been brought up in Italy amid the refining influences of the later Renaissance, and she felt completely out of her element at Henry's court, where boisterous love-making, horsemanship, and fencing were much more thought of than art or literature. It was owing to this retirement from court that the famous Hôtel de Rambouillet rose up at the corner of the Rue St. Honoré and the Rue St. Thomas du Louvre, just where the Place du Palais Royal stands to-day. Its magnificent gardens, its broad, balustraded staircase, big windows, and, above all, the "Blue Salon," have been described again and again. Down the Rue St. Honoré came every morning gallants on horseback, fine ladies in huge, cumbersome coaches, impecunious literary men on foot; everyone, in fact, who ever hoped to be anyone. Many were the follies of that gay and witty society, with their endless discussions on platonic love, and the affectations of "Les précieuses," but it was in this Hôtel that the idea of the aristocracy of letters first

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came into being, for never before had it been possible for the Princesse de Condé, for instance, to meet on equal terms with the son of a wine merchant like Voiture, whose only passport to society was wit and poetic fire.

Some little way down the Rue St. Honoré, at the corner where it joins the Rue Sauval, in a house which is now No. 92, a child was born early in 1622, the son of a worthy couple, an upholsterer and his wife, named Poquelin. It is more than doubtful whether any frequenter of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, had heard of the child's birth, but it is certain that he would not have attached the slightest importance to it if he had. Yet this little Jean Poquelin, who afterwards took the name of Molière, was destined to shatter the affectations and extravagances of the salons with one tremendous peal of laughter, when he produced "*Les Précieuses Ridicules*," in 1659.

By the irony of fate, the man who had that rarest of gifts, that of writing comedy not only for the moment, but for all time, the man who made Paris rock with laughter and brought a smile even to the lips of "*Le Roi Soleil*," had a private life which was little but unrelieved tragedy. In 1662 he married a pretty young actress, Armande Béjart by name. Pretty and brainless, frivolous and heartless though she was, Molière adored her. As for her feelings for him, he was useful when he filled her purse, and useful, too, in that the majority



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of his evenings were spent away from home. Night after night he would go to his theatre in the Rue St. Honoré, at the corner of the Rue de Valois, the theatre which he had evolved out of the old Salle des Spectacles built by Richlieu, and, decked out in paint and finery, would bring down roars of applause as he played the part of the duped husband or the comic servant. Night after night he would go home to play the part of the duped husband in reality, suffering all the agonies of jealousy and flying into passionate rage, then imploring equally passionate forgiveness, all for a wife who was far too much taken up with her lovers to spare any time for her husband. The rooms of his house in the Rue Richlieu, the next turning out of the Rue St. Honoré after the Rue Valois, saw many a strange scene, not the least strange of which was the last, when, on the night of Friday, February 16th, 1673, he was carried home from the theatre, a tragic, comic figure, still wearing the ridiculous dress in which he was playing the "Malade Imaginaire," to die of a broken blood-vessel, and perhaps a broken heart as well.

From Molière's day we must pass on to the middle of the eighteenth century. Madame Geoffrin spent her whole life in the Rue St. Honoré, and it was here that during her long and happy years of widowhood she received all that was worth receiving in Paris. The kindly, sensible old bourgeoisie, with her some-

## THE RUE SAINT HONORÉ

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what tyrannical ways, was particular as regards morals, a fact that made her nearly unique among the hostesses of the Louis Quinze period, and though wit and cleverness were allowed full scope, there were limits which were never to be passed in her house. D'Alembert, Diderot, Julie de l'Espinasse, Madame Necker, the Abbé Galiani, Baron d'Holbach, and Grimm were among the many who made their way along the filthy street with its ditch in the centre, down which every imaginable kind of garbage made its way, open and unashamed, towards the river which was used as the common drain. In an age in which everyone wrote verses or memoirs or philosophical treatises, old Madame Geoffrin was urged to write her reminiscences. She began, and this is what she produced:—

“MEMOIRS OF MADAME GEOFFRIN IN SIX VOLUMES.”

“PREFACE.”

“The truth of my character, the naturalness of my mind, the simplicity and variety of my tastes, have combined to make me happy in every circumstance of life. I shall now feel much pleasure in revealing myself to myself. This work will be to me what some elaborate piece of embroidery is to other women; the choice of the design will amuse me, the execution of it will occupy some time. I shall work at it

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a little, I shall get tired of it, and I shall not finish it."

That was the first and the last chapter of Madame Geoffrin's memoirs

Not far from Madame Geoffrin lived Madame de Tencin, whose reputation was by no means unsullied. She it was who, having an unwanted infant, left it to take its chance one November night on the steps of an old church in the Ile de Cité. The child grew up to be the mathematician, d'Alembert, whose name we shall come across more than once in our wanderings through the streets.

Round the corner, in the Rue Royale, was the house in which Baron d'Holbach entertained lavishly, and where the Encyclopædists gathered together to talk far into the night on every subject under the sun.

But we must not linger too long over the graces, the vices, and the wit of the eighteenth century. We must advance to the year 1793. Madame Geoffrin and her circle, d'Holbach and his, have nearly all died peacefully. Only Condorcet is left to see the reaping of what he and his brother philosophers have sown.

On the site of what is now Number 398 was the Maison Duplay, the carpenter's house in which the two Robespierres lodged, and where they were afterwards joined by Couthon, the cripple, whose very deformities added to the terror he inspired.

## THE RUE SAINT HONORÉ

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Down the Rue St. Honoré the mob had surged on August 10th when the impotence of Louis XVI had left his Swiss guards to be murdered, and his palace of the Tuileries to be sacked. Now, in 1793, nearly every afternoon, a dull rumbling along the cobblestones heralded the passing of the tumbrils. At first a dense crowd filled the streets to shout and jeer at the victims of the Revolution, then the sight ceased to be a novelty, then it became a terror, not only to the aristocracy, but to the bourgeois as well. Whose turn would it be next? The woman who threw up the window to watch the gloomy procession pass to-day might be herself in the Conciergerie, the antechamber of death, to-morrow. The condemned prisoner, looking in at the ground floor of some house, as he was drawn on to his death, saw some honest fellow sitting down to a meal with his wife and children. A week later, perhaps, father and mother would be flung into one of the trenches that served as a common grave, seals would be on the doors, and as to the children, they would be turned out into the streets to find food and shelter if they could. No wonder that fear lay heavy upon the hearts of the dwellers in the Rue St. Honoré, that their eyes were weary of the sight of bound prisoners taken to the guillotine, and that their hearts grew sick within them when they heard the rumbling of the carts. No wonder, too, that they shouted and yelled

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in wild delight as Robespierre and his compères, wounded and battered, half dead already most of them, were carried in their turn to the Place de la Concorde. Strangers embraced each other in the streets, and strong men sobbed with thankfulness. The Terror was over.

A little later on, and the old street echoed with the sound of Napoleon's famous "whiff of grapeshot," the marks of which may still be seen on the walls of St. Roch; the sign of order returning from chaos. The church itself, where Bossuet had held his congregation spell-bound, where Madame Geoffrin worshipped, where revolutionaries had feasted and got drunk, was turned into a sacred edifice once more, and then in the changes made in Paris during the Empire, the greater part of the traffic from east to west was diverted into the newly-cut Rue de Rivoli, and the Rue St. Honoré, its part in history over, became a quiet backwater saturated with historical associations.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ILE DE CITÉ

IF we turn to the right on reaching the end of the Rue St. Honoré, and follow the Rue du Pont Neuf across the bridge of the same name, we find ourselves in the very heart of Paris, the ancient Paris of the Romans and the Franks, every foot of which has seen history. We will begin with the Pont Neuf itself.

Henry IV took a keen interest in the building of this new bridge, and so did all the citizens of Paris. In fact, it became a regular practice to cross from one unfinished pier to another by a plank, so that many cold baths and not a few deaths resulted therefrom. It was on June 20th, 1603, a lovely summer day, that Henry himself resolved to cross in the same fashion. A murmur of protest went up from the spectators, and an old courtier enumerated all the accidents that had happened to other adventurous spirits. "But not one of them was a king," said Henry, with his gay Gascon laugh, as he jumped from one plank to another and reached the other side in safety. His statue still looks down upon his beloved Paris, though it is not the original, for that was turned into cannon balls for the Revolutionaries in 1792.



## THE ILE DE CITÉ

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By a piece of irony, the new statue, erected in 1818, was composed of the bronze Napoleon which had stood so proudly on the top of the Vendôme Column during the Empire.

East of the Pont Neuf is the Place Dauphine, which Henry planned in honour of his son, afterwards Louis XIII. Long before there was any question of either bridge or Place, this was the scene of the consummation of an act of treachery. In the year 1314, Jacques de Molay, the Grand Master of the Templars, a fine old warrior, white-haired and scarred by many a battle against the infidel, was burnt to death on the end of the island, while Philip the Fair looked on from his palace garden, where the Palais de Justice now stands. The story of the downfall of the Templars is far too long to come within the scope of this book, but Froude gives all the details of the treachery by which it was accomplished in one of his vivid essays.

Four hundred and fifty years later a girl in her early teens might have been seen at one of the windows of what is now Number 14 Place Dauphine, gazing vaguely out upon the Pont Neuf and the river beyond, dreaming of one of those little Paradises of sentiment which Rousseau had brought into fashion. She was not a very attractive child, for she always took herself seriously, and lacked the saving grace of a sense of humour. However, if she had had a sense of humour she would hardly have



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been a disciple of Jean Jacques. This girl, Manon Phlipon by name, the daughter of a rather tipsy engraver, was destined to be Madame Roland, mistress of the Hôtels Calonne and Britannique, where we shall meet with her again later on, and to set forth eventually from the Conciergerie, the towers of which she might have seen from the back windows of her old home, on that terrible journey to the guillotine in the Place de la Concorde.

As soon as Paris became a city with a king, it was necessary to build a palace for him, and no site was so safe or so suitable as the Ile de Cité. Here, where the Palais de Justice stands to-day, all the mediæval kings made their home until the desire for more space led them further afield to the mainland. This was the abode of Saint Louis, who lived here in simple patriarchal fashion, ready to give an ear to all who came to him. Many a time he walked in the gardens, which stretched right down to the water's edge, clad in a plain camlet tunic, a sleeveless surcoat, and a black mantle, with a cap, ornamented by a peacock's feather, on his head. Free access was denied to none, and in a little while a group of petitioners would have gathered round him. Then the King, calling his servants, would command them to spread a carpet on the ground. He would sit down and give his judgment there and then, despotically enough

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very often, and unjustly if Jews and infidels were concerned, but with an insight and a sense of humour that won the hearts of all his subjects.

It is by his church, the Sainte-Chapelle, that Saint Louis is principally remembered to-day. The description of its architecture can be found in any guide, so we will only pause for a moment to consider its human interest.

It was in 1238 that the King learned, to his horror, that the Emperor Baldwin of Constantinople, being in financial difficulties, had actually pawned the crown of thorns to some Venetian merchants. At once Louis set to work to raise money (by extra taxes upon the Jews, it is said), bought the sacred relic, and had it brought to Paris. He himself rode out to Sens to meet the envoys who brought it, and he himself, bare-headed and on foot, carried it into Paris enclosed in three caskets, the outermost of wood, the next of silver, and the third of gold. A new chapel was begun to contain it, and so arose the light Gothic spire of the Saint Chapelle, which, with the exception of the kitchens, is all that remains to-day of the old palace of Saint Louis.

In 1360, when four English barons came to Paris to arrange terms of peace, they were taken to see the relics, and as a gift of the greatest value that could be bestowed, four spines were broken off the crown of thorns and given to them.

## THE ILE DE CITE

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In 1792, when religion was abolished, the relics were scattered (most of them were recovered and put into the treasury at Nôtre Dame), the windows were broken, and the paintings on the walls defaced. First a granary, next a club, then put up for sale as "National Property," the old thirteenth century church narrowly escaped being sold for building material.

When we reach the Conciergerie we are in the midst of memories so poignant that a repetition of them is hardly necessary. Ruthlessly altered though it has been, the Conciergerie is still the Antechamber of Death, with an atmosphere heavily fraught with tragedy. The Queen's cell retains much of its former character; here is the chair she sat in; here she wrote that last letter to her sister which is still preserved, smudged with tears, in the archives. The adjacent cell was the scene of Robespierre's last hours, for here he lay, half dead, already, his pale blue satin coat stained with blood from his broken jaw, waiting his turn to go to the tumbrils, lined up against the iron railings in the Cour de Mai. In the other prisons the occupants might still keep up a travesty of social life. In the Conciergerie the mask was dropped. It was only a question of waiting for the mock trial, for the horrors of the "toilette" (the hair-cutting that left the neck bare), and for the last journey through Paris to the Place de la Concorde.

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It was in 1796, three years after Marie Antoinette's execution, that the Abbé de Salamon, Papal Internuncio, was imprisoned here on a charge of conspiracy against the Directory. The concierge, Richard, a kindly man by all accounts, gave him, as a special favour, the two mattresses used by the Queen. The Abbé relates how, on the first morning, as soon as the door was unlocked, a little pug came in. "He jumped on my bed, went all round it, and went away. It was the Queen's pug; Richard had given him a home, and took the greatest care of him. He came in this way to sniff his mistress's mattresses. I saw him do it every morning at the same hours for three whole months, but, try as I would, I could never catch him."

Overlooking the Quai d'Horloge, where the Governor's quarters are to-day, were once the apartments of Fouquier-Tinville. Every day, when the Revolution was at its height, he would toil, "like an ox in the furrow," to feed Madame Guillotine. Hour after hour he perused acts of accusation, examinations, denunciations, marking a "hic" on the margin in red pencil to show some snare in which his victim could be caught. In between whiles he would drink copious draughts of brandy, jeer at his prisoners, and survey with satisfaction the list of nobles, beggars, nuns, fish-wives, priests, soldiers, girls and greybeards, who composed the "batch" for the next day.

## THE ILE DE CITÉ

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Then, work being done, he would leave the Convention, go home to the Conciergerie, play with his children, and, sitting down to supper between his gentle, retiring wife and his old aunt, would eat with a good appetite, chatting calmly and placidly the while. Only once, and then probably owing to the brandy, he stopped as he was crossing the Pont au Change one night, and, clutching his companion's arm, pointed in horror at the water beneath. "See how red it is" he exclaimed, shuddering.

Turning back the pages of history, into the Middle Ages again, the Pont au Change was the great haunt of the money-changers, whose houses were built all along the bridge. There was a special reason for this. The astute old man in the black tunic, who sat, spectacles on nose, beside his scales, had a good collection of false coin, all ready to be palmed off on the unwary stranger, just arrived from England or Flanders. The only drawback to this practice was that the provost's men were likely to come along at any moment in search of the same false coin, and if it were discovered, the culprit ran an excellent chance of a hanging if the sentence were mild, or being boiled in oil if it were severe. Therefore, a window opening straight on to the river was a great asset. The inconvenient coins could be dropped out in a moment, never to be discovered until the zeal of nineteenth-century researches revealed the practice.



## THE ILE DE CITÉ

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On the north side of Nôtre Dame the old Rues des Chantres, des Ursins and Chanoinesse recall the ancient days when the Cathedral precincts covered all this part of the island. Various chapels, on the steps of one of which, St. Jean-le-Rond by name, the infant d'Alembert was left by his mother to take his chance of death or a home, were dotted about the cloisters. There were some charming dwellings, too, each with its garden and its view over the river, reserved for the clergy of Nôtre Dame, who pondered and meditated, or waxed fat in slothful ease, according to their dispositions. No. 11 Quai aux Fleurs marks the site of Fulbert's house, which was the scene of many a meeting between Héloïse and her rather sorry lover, Abélard. In later years many a man not directly attached to the church came here for the peaceful solitude of the cloisters. Philibert Delorme and Pierre Lescot, the architects, ended their days here. Boileau came here, and so did Racine, who spent ten of his best years, from 1667-1677, in a house in the Rue des Ursins, while Ménage, the witty, scientific abbé, lived near at hand in the Rue Massillon. Many a time their friends would come from the fashionable quarters in the Marais and round the Louvre, to talk of art and the drama over a bottle or two of burgundy in one of the old low-ceilinged rooms, or looking down upon the river from an iron balcony such as some of the houses retain to this day.

## THE ILE DE CITE

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The Rue des Ursins, besides giving a home to Racine, saw strange sights during the Revolution. At No. 19 there are still some traces left of the ancient chapel of St. Aignan, within whose walls Saint Bernard once preached. Allowed to fall into ruin, it had long been disused, when, in 1793, a carter might be seen going into it one day, followed at intervals by a peasant, a sempstress, a National guard, and various loafers who lounged along the old street with nothing to do apparently but kill time. The chapel of St. Aignan was one of the places where the refractory priests said Mass and heard the confessions of the faithful under the very eyes of the Terrorists. One would carry the Sacrament in a paintbox, another, dressed as a costermonger, would keep it in his carmagnole. Tracked down by Fouquier's agents, condemned to death by default, with the guillotine ever before them, not a day passed on which the prohibited Mass was not celebrated in some loft or out-house, or ruined chapel, like this of Saint Aignan.

Passing round the back of Nôtre Dame by the Quai de l'Archevêché, which crosses what was once the garden of the Archbishops of Paris, we turn into the Parvis de Nôtre Dame, and find ourselves in front of the Cathedral, which has seen so much of history that we cannot attempt to recall more than a few of its memories.



## CHAPTER III

### NOTRE DAME

THE famous "chimères," or their predecessors, for many of them have been renewed, which look down from the towers upon the Parvis de Nôtre Dame, or gaze, with cynical stare, over the city spread out all around them, have been the silent witnesses of many a sight of weal and woe, of magnificence and shame.

When the stone of which they were cut was new and white, in the year 1248, Saint Louis came here from the Palace in militant humility to receive his pilgrim's staff and scrip from the Bishop, before setting out upon an expedition to the Holy Land for the purpose of subduing the infidel. As Saint Louis preferred the sword to the pilgrim's staff when dealing with unbelievers, whether Jews, Turks, or infidels, the grotesque monsters high up on the tower may have curved their lips yet more cynically as they looked down upon the scene.

In 1422 the Parvis was lined with troops whose countenances were strange and hateful to the people of Paris. They were the English archers in Lincoln green, whose long bows made of good English yew had been the deciding factor in many a hard-fought field. Now they

## NÔTRE DAME

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were gathered together for the coronation of their boy king, Henry VI, the first and the last English king to be crowned in Nôtre Dame. The people looked on in sullen gloom, unresponsive to the cheers of the sturdy archers as their crowned king was presented to them at the church door. Maybe the chimères laughed again in the silence of the night, as they told each other of the way in which the archers would tumble thankfully out of Paris amid the curses of the people, before so many years had passed, and of the woes that were to accumulate upon the weak shoulders of that same boy king.

Day after day the Parvis was the scene of coming and going. Priests carrying the Host issued from the great door of Nôtre Dame accompanied by white-robed choristers and acolytes; scholars in their gowns passed before the church on their way across the river to deliver or listen to lectures at the Sorbonne; philosophers, deep in meditation, emerged from some secluded garden in the cathedral precincts, to stroll out to the country beyond the city walls; soldiers and swashbucklers, armed to the teeth, swaggered across to some ale-house near by; lovers came forth in the cool of the evening to gaze silently, perhaps, at the smooth-flowing waters of the Seine, where the reflection of the sunset sky flashed and sparkled in a thousand ripples of orange, gold and crimson. Some poor wretch picked up, half dead, in the streets, would be carried into the old Hôtel Dieu, while



*!From a Book of Hours.*

LA POINTE DE CITÉ, 'ABOUT' 1400.



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a state coach accompanied by mounted grooms and footmen rattled over the rough stones, bearing a gorgeously clothed court lady to confession.

Processions were the chief amusement given by the great nobles to the poorer citizens of Paris in the Middle Ages. The memoirs and histories of the time abound with descriptions of how this or that ambassador made his entry, how the King came in procession to give thanks for a victory, or the Queen to give thanks for the birth of a Dauphin. Here is an account of the procession to Nôtre Dame when the English ambassadors were received by Francis I in 1518, written by an eye-witness, the anonymous "Bourgeois de Paris":—"The following Tuesday (Dec. 14th), the King and the ambassadors went in state to the great church of Nôtre Dame de Paris, with the princes of the blood and all the noblesse, to take a solemn oath with the said ambassadors. The sight, as they passed along the streets, was one of the finest ever seen, for the King was accompanied by the archers of the guard, who marched first, then the Swiss guard, then his two hundred officers of the court, who carried their falcon-beaked wands in their hands, and then the gentlemen pensioners of his household, all on foot; following them came the lords and captains, dukes and counts, then the princes of the blood riding beside the ambassadors. In such state the King set out from

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the Tournelles, and went to Nôtre Dame, escorted by the five cardinals. . . . The Legate sang the Mass in the cathedral, while two cardinals acted as deacon and sub-deacon. The service was held in the choir, where a great canopy of cloth of gold had been erected, supported by four silver-gilt pillars . . . It is almost impossible to describe the magnificence of the scene to one who was not present. The *Te Deum* was chanted to an accompaniment of organs, and all the bells were pealed, so that it was three o'clock before the service was over."

Besides these gay and festive doings, the chimères had many a sadder, grimmer procession to look upon. Across the Parvis would come, at a foot pace, a company of the Provost's guard, escorting a common cart or tumbril (a word which was to convey a yet more sinister meaning in time to come), containing generally two occupants, a strong, burly man, with a coil of rope, or an axe, and the other a grey-beard maybe, a woman, or a youth, clad in a single garment, bareheaded and barefooted. The cart would stop opposite the great door, where perhaps the gorgeous hangings put out for a royal procession earlier in the day, had not yet been removed. The culprit would be made to get out of the cart, and kneel on the stones before the door, with a lighted taper in each hand, to beg mercy and forgiveness of God and Our Blessed Lady, for his sin of



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perjury, of theft, of reading heretical books, of forgery, or whatever his crime might be. That done, he was taken back to the cart, and the procession continued its journey to the Place de Grève (now the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville), where the stake or the gibbet awaited its arrival, for though the powers above might forgive, the powers on earth were usually adamant, more especially if the prisoner's misdoings savoured of heresy.

It was in the early morning of August 17th, 1572, that the dwellers in the houses round Nôtre Dame were awakened by the noise of hammering and sawing, mixed with a considerable amount of heated argument. The workmen were putting the finishing touches to the wooden dais which they had erected outside the main door of the cathedral, in readiness for the marriage ceremony of Marguerite de Valois and Henry of Navarre. Paris was in a white heat of excitement, which the close, sultry weather did nothing to allay. The marriage was to unite two hostile parties, but whatever festivities were arranged to celebrate the event, the general feeling was that something sinister seemed to overhang the city. All went well on the 17th, however. Huguenot and Catholic were assembled in the Parvis, while the Cardinal de Bourbon performed the marriage service in full view of the assembly. That done, Marguerite and her party moved on into the church to hear Mass, while the



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heretic Henry and his friends loitered about under the trees of the bishop's garden till his newly-made wife rejoined him in order to dine in state at the bishop's palace. Exactly a week later, rejoicings and reconciliation were drowned in the blood of St. Bartholomew's Day. Once more the monstrous animals must have smiled cynically as they saw men and women hunted like wild beasts across the Parvis, and mutilated bodies caught against the arches of the bridges, as the stream carried them slowly down the river. Yet again they smiled when they saw Henry, a conqueror this time, a king, and a Catholic to boot, coming like a true son of the church to hear Mass and assist at a solemn *Te Deum* in the very building from which he had been excluded at his marriage. But he was right; he loved his Paris as he loved his mistresses, and she was well worth a Mass.

Let us pass on for a moment to 1793, and see religion abolished. Images of saints are thrown down and smashed; busts of Voltaire and Rousseau take their place; pulpits and choir stalls make bonfires, and silver chalices are sent to the Mint. But though religion is abolished, something must be worshipped; so the chimères, such of them, at least, as have not disappeared in revolutionary ardour, see a new kind of procession crossing the Parvis, a Goddess of Reason (an opera dancer before deification), borne shoulder high to the altar of Nôtre Dame, there to be adored by National

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Representatives, soldiers, women, unfrocked priests, married nuns, and all the tatterdemalion mob which a revolution brings forth to the light of day. But only one writer has the pen which, biassed or not, can bring before us in vivid word-painting the wild episode of the Cult of Reason; therefore, we leave the subject now, and refer the reader to the pages of Carlyle.

After the saturnalia of the reign of Reason had exhausted itself, after churches had been closed entirely, then re-opened for the ministrations of the constitutional clergy, Napoleon restored the old religion once more, and in 1804 gave Paris one of the most magnificent scenes that ever passed before her eyes; his and Josephine's coronation. The dark interior of Nôtre Dame was illuminated with countless candles which lit up the glittering orders of the marshals, and the diamonds of the ladies. The clergy intoned a solemn *Tues Petrus* as Pius VII, old and humiliated, but still an awe-inspiring figure, advanced slowly to the high altar, upon which Mdle. Maillard, the dancer, had sat enthroned a few short years ago. Then he was joined by Napoleon, who, standing on the altar steps, consecrated Josephine, Empress of the French, and crowned her with his own hands, placing the little closed crown gently on her head, taking it off and replacing it again, "as if," said the Duchesse d'Abrantès, "to assure himself that it should rest lightly and

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and softly on her." But when it came to his own crown, "he hastily took it," continued the Duchesse, "from the Pope's hands, and placed it haughtily on his own head—a proceeding which doubtless startled his Holiness."

A few years more and Louis XVIII, restored with much difficulty, hears Mass in Nôtre Dame on the fall of Napoleon; then Louis Philippe does the same when the elder Bourbon line has fallen in its turn. But Paris is vast, and this book is small. We must leave Nôtre Dame and the consideration of what the "chimères" have looked upon during their vigil of so many centuries, in order to pass on by way of the Petit Pont to the quays on the south side of the river.



L'insatiable vampire à cornue  
 Sur la Grande Cité convoie sa pâture.

LE STRYGE.

[Meryon.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE QUAYS

LEAVING Nôtre Dame, we cross the river by the Petit Pont, which has a curious little story of its own to tell. In the year 1718, a poor woman's son met his death by drowning, somewhere in the waters of the Seine in or near Paris. The old mother was heart-broken, not only at his loss, but also because she had no idea where the body lay. The old superstitions were dying a hard death, so when she was told by some wise woman that a wooden bowl, containing a bit of blessed bread and a lighted taper, launched on the river and allowed to float down the stream, would stop infallibly over the spot where the drowned boy lay, she set to work at once to carry out the experiment. One can imagine the anxious eagerness with which the old woman set the frail craft afloat, having waited patiently for a windless day, and how delighted she was to see the flame burning clearly and steadily as the bowl was caught up by an eddy which carried it out into mid-stream. By some evil chance, however, it floated right across the river and brought up against a heavily-laden barge of hay. In a moment an overhanging wisp was on fire.



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The flames grew quickly, and the whole barge was soon ablaze. The men in charge jumped overboard, and the old woman, the innocent cause of all the trouble, disappeared, no doubt without waiting to see the result of her experiment. The blazing barge, left to its own devices, drifted down-stream until it was brought up against one of the stone piers of the Petit Pont. This bridge was looked upon as something of a triumph of engineering, for it was one of the few made of stone instead of timber. Unluckily the wooden scaffolding used in constructing the arches had never been pulled down, so that when the barge drifted against it, a further conflagration resulted. On the bridge, according to the custom of the day, was a row of shops and houses, built largely of wood. In a few hours the whole structure was ablaze from end to end, the roar of the flames and the crash of falling houses could be heard over half Paris; the stone bridge itself gave way beneath the weight and intense heat, so that when the fire had fairly burnt itself out, nothing was left but a heap of blackened ruins sticking up out of the river. And all this the result of the old woman's taper! But instead of lingering on the Petit Pont we must continue our stroll along the quays, for we have many a curious story to hear in the course of the next mile or so.

Many of the streets behind the Quai St. Michel remain much as they were in pre-

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Revolution days, and have given a setting for countless novels. Balzac, Dumas, Victor Hugo have all wandered down these narrow, somewhat smelly streets with their quaint passages and tortuous windings, but we must pass on until we come to the Quai Conti. The Rue Guénégaud is the first turning to the left from this quay, just before we come to the Hôtel des Monnaies. No. 12 Rue Guénégaud was once the Hôtel Britannique, on the second floor of which the Rolands had an apartment from 1791 to 1792. These were probably Madame Roland's happiest days. She was a power in the land, she was hostess of a salon, such as she had dreamed of in her girlish days in the old house on the Place Dauphine. Wild Utopias were planned, impossible schemes of regeneration laid out. The old order had changed, and the new was to be one long reign of those much-abused words, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." Could Manon Roland, could her friends, Buzot, Pétion, or Brissot, have read the signs of the times correctly, they might have discovered more than one alarming portent, but they were blinded and deafened "by the exuberance of their own verbosity." The walls rang again to the sound of their voices; Madame Roland sat listening in rapture, or serving out glasses of eau sucré, for the feast she offered was one of reason, pure and simple. Only one of the guests, the cold, impenetrable Maximilien Robespierre,

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may have seen further than the rest, and he had no wish to share his visions with the sheep he was ere long going to butcher.

A fine old eighteenth century house, No. 13 Quai Conti, with its entrance at the side in the Impasse Conti, was tenanted in the latter half of the eighteenth century by a Corsican lady, Madame Pernon. In 1783 she received a letter from her old friend and countrywoman, Madame Buonaparte, asking if she would be kind enough to take an interest in her boy Napoleon, who was just being transferred from Brienne to the École Militaire in Paris, where he had not a soul to befriend him. Madame Pernon sent the boy an invitation at once, and the house on the Quai Conti became a second home to him, where "a garret at the left angle of the house on the third floor," was always at his disposal. He was an awkward lad of fifteen in those days, very short, olive-complexioned, with clothes that never seemed to fit him, and provincial manners, which Madame Pernon's daughter, afterwards the Duchesse d'Abrantès, set herself to correct by means of teasing and laughter. He was so solemn in those days, and took himself so seriously, that the Pernons regarded him with kindly amusement when he expounded his schemes of army reform, or showed how tactics should be revolutionised, and as for his appearance on the day he got his commission in the artillery, they burst into fits of laughter, and declared

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that his boots alone were sufficient to swallow him up. But these were by no means the least happy years of his life, and the Emperor always retained a kindly feeling for the garret in the Quai Conti which had so often sheltered the lonely schoolboy.

We cannot leave the Quai Conti without some mention of those fascinating bookstalls with their miscellaneous contents, which have kept their abode upon the quays ever since they were turned off the Pont Neuf. No book has ever been written about Paris without mentioning them, so we will content ourselves with an unimportant historical incident connected with them. Who has not heard of Tallien and his adored Thérédia Cabarrus, and of those sultry days of Thermidor, when she lay in prison awaiting the guillotine, from which only the long-expected downfall of Robespierre could save her? Day after day passed and no news came. At last she got a note taken to Tallien. "They kill me to-morrow. Are you but a coward then?" were the words it contained. They stung Tallien to the quick. He entered heart and soul into the struggle with Robespierre. By superhuman efforts the tyrant was overthrown, and Thérédia Cabarrus became Madame Tallien. There the story should have ended, but it had a sequel. Thérédia tired of him. She obtained a divorce, and soared by successive marriages to the heights of the social world; while Tallien, ill and

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poverty-stricken, sank ever lower. One day in 1820, Baron Pasquier, Minister of Louis XVIII, was strolling on the quays, pausing every now and then to turn over the pages of a book, or look critically at a print. His attention was drawn to an old man, shabby and bent, who was trying to sell a bundle of books to one of the stall-keepers. Pasquier glanced at them. They were a set of Tallien's revolutionary journal, "L'Ami des Citoyens." He looked at the old man again and started. It was Tallien himself! After a moment, Pasquier said, "It is curious; I was just looking for a copy of the "Ami des Citoyens" to add to my collection of Revolutionary papers." "I am delighted to have the honour of presenting you with the last copy," returned Tallien, who could still recall the polished manners of the old Régime. Pasquier's hand, which had wandered into his pocket, was hastily withdrawn again. He accepted the volumes with grateful thanks and went away. The upshot of this unexpected meeting at the bookstalls was that Pasquier told Louis XVIII the whole story, and the King, who had a certain kindly malice at times, insisted upon bestowing a pension of a hundred louis out of his privy purse upon the old revolutionary. Poor Tallien! President of the Convention, then husband of the splendid Thérézia; now a pensioner upon the charity of Louis XVI's brother! It was indeed the irony of fate.



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At the end of the Quai Conti is the big, domed edifice, built by Mazarin for a college, and now the Institut de France. In the earlier days of French history, when Paris first became a walled city, the Tour de Nesle stood just here. Tradition has it that Margaret of Burgundy, whose name has come down to us stained with the blood of horrible orgies, lived here in the absence of her husband, Louis X. According to the same tradition, a young scholar or traveller, ignorant of the locality, would pass the Tour de Nesle of an evening, and notice a beautiful woman looking down, like Jezebel, from an upper window. In response to her invitation, he would go in, but never again would he come forth, though a body sewn up in a sack might be found in the river next day.

To pass from lurid tradition to more pleasing fact, that ingenious rascal, Benvenuto Cellini, was given the Tour de Nesle for a workshop by Francis I, and in his autobiography he gives an amusing account of a visit the King paid him there. The Italian craftsman was busy upon a silver image of Jupiter, and Francis, eager to see it, came unannounced with all his court. A gorgeous assembly they must have been; the King in high good humour, having just partaken of an excellent dinner; the Dauphin, afterwards Henry II, paying but little attention to the homely Dauphiness, Catherine de Medicis, who accompanied him;



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the King and Queen of Navarre, cousin and sister to Francis, ignorant of the great struggle between their descendant and Catherine's sons, which was to dye history red in another fifty years. Following these great princes came the suite, gay and cheery, too, with a small army of servants and retainers behind them. The cavalcade pulled up before the old tower, which re-echoed to the sound of many hammers. Bidding his suite be silent, Francis dismounted and walked unannounced into the building, followed by the princes. "When he entered my great hall," says Benvenuto, "the first thing he saw was me with a large silver plate in my hand, which I was hammering for the body of Jupiter. Another man was making the head, and another the legs, so that the noise was tremendous. Now, there was a little French boy working near me, who had been annoying me in some trifling way. I gave him a kick, and, as ill luck would have it, my foot caught him in the fork of the legs, and sent him reeling more than four cubits away; so that just as the King came in, the child fell full against him." Francis laughed heartily at the incident, and was soon in his element, deep in conversation about the Renaissance work he loved so much, and where we must leave him to continue our walk along the Quai Malaquais.

We have now left the Renaissance days behind; we have passed over the three sons of

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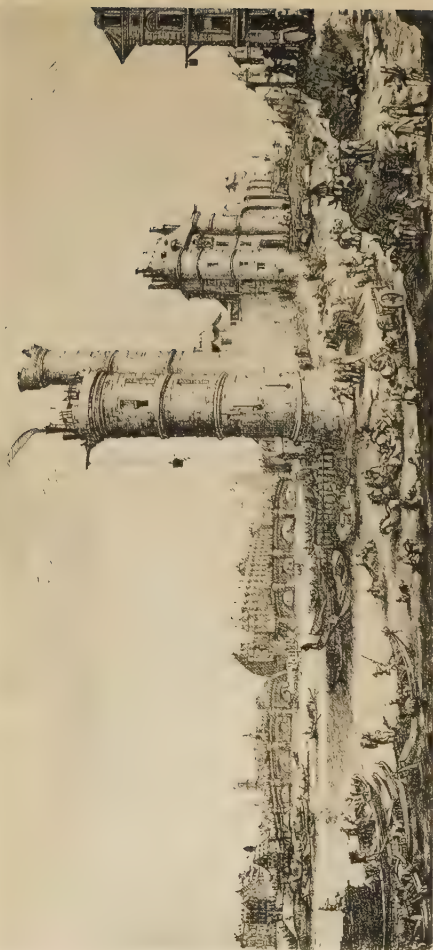
Catherine de Medicis; the wars of the League are at an end, and Henry IV reigns in the Louvre. We must sweep away the tall houses of the Quai, the bookstalls and the trams. If we can do that, and replace them by large gardens, between which a rough narrow track leads down to the water's edge, where a clumsy ferry boat is moored, we shall see one of those slight incidents which only a gossiping historian notes, quite valueless in themselves, but which make history live in fresh, vivid colours instead of dry dust. It is the dusk of the evening when three or four men, plainly dressed in doublets, trunk hose, and high boots of soft leather, come tramping down the path between the gardens. The ferryman appears in answer to a hail, and proceeds to take the four men, who have been hunting all day, across to the Louvre. One of the four gets into conversation with him, and asks what he thinks of the Treaty of Vervins, which has just been signed. "Ma foi," is the reply. "I know nothing about that fine treaty, but I do know that every single thing is taxed, including this wretched boat of mine, so that I can hardly make enough out of it to keep body and soul together." "But how about the King?" pursues the passenger. "Oh, the King's a good fellow enough," grumbles the boatman, tugging at his oars, "but then he has his mistress, who is always wanting fine dresses and trinkets, and it is we poor devils who must

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pay for it all. It wouldn't be so bad if she kept herself for him only, but they say she lavishes her favours upon many another as well." A great shout of laughter is the only reply to this, and as the boat grates upon the pebbles of the opposite shore, the four men spring out and make their way into the Louvre.

The next morning the boatman is summoned before the King, and to his horror realises that the huntsman with whom he had spoken his mind so freely the evening before was none other than Henry himself. He is not made to feel any easier when he is ordered to repeat every word of the conversation before the haughty Gabrielle d'Estrées, who is standing nearby. Moreover, a sense of humour is not a marked characteristic in Gabrielle, and she turns red with anger as the ferryman stammers out his imputations, gently prompted by the King if he shows any signs of toning down his remarks. "Let the fellow be hanged at once," is Gabrielle's remark when Henry asks her opinion at the end of the story. "Thou art but a fool after all, ma mie," replies her royal lover, not ill-pleased at having this opportunity of pointing out that he knows something of his mistress's vagaries, "the poor devil has been driven into this cursed bad humour by hunger and misery. My decision is that from now onwards he shall never pay another sou for his boat, and I take my oath that his next



[Callot.]

LE PONT NEUF, FROM THE TOUR DE NESLE.



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cry will be, ' Long live Henry and long live Gabrielle.' ”

As we pass from the Quai Malaquais to the Quai Voltaire, the gardens and the stony path to the river's edge may fade once more into the limbo of the past, and give place to the tall, balconied houses we see to-day. We are standing before the Hôtel de Villette, now No. 27 Quai Voltaire, at the corner of the quay and the Rue de Beaune. The day is Wednesday, February 11th, 1778, and it is Voltaire's first day in Paris after eight and twenty years of exile. His travelling carriage rolled up to the door last night, and to-day all Paris is flocking to greet him, old friends, new friends, strangers, all, in fact, who can find the slightest pretext for pressing the hand of the witty, old king of literature. Upstairs in one of the rooms, which still remain much as they were on that day, the emaciated, shrunken figure, in nightcap and bedgown, holds a court that the crowned king at Versailles would have envied. Downstairs the lackeys make way for their masters and quarrel with their fellows. Outside is a throng of coaches, gorgeously painted, with historic arms on the panels; horses stamp and fidget, coachmen shout one to another, sedan chairs escorted by lackeys make their way through the throng. To stand on the Quai Voltaire on that and the succeeding days was to see all who were worth seeing in Paris come to pay their homage to



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the great man. On March 30th the spectator would have seen a splendid blue coach liberally bespangled with golden stars drive up to the entrance. After some delay, and a good deal of commotion inside the house, he would have seen the door open, and a strange figure appear. A lean old man, with skin stretched like parchment, with nose and chin that seemed endeavouring to meet, and deep-set eyes that still sparkled with wit and animation, emerged from the house. A grey peruke, of a shape long since out of date, covered his head; he wore a red coat, white silk stockings, shoes with huge silver buckles, and over everything a superb sable pelisse, the gift of Catherine of Russia. It was Voltaire himself, reported to be dying, or even dead, going to his apotheosis, his triumph at the Comédie Française.

Now we will suppose the same spectator to be upon the quay on the night of Sunday, May 31st, when darkness had fallen upon the ill-lighted city. There are no state coaches with their quarrelsome lackeys drawn up before the door now. The house itself is dark, and the lean old man with the cynical, mischievous face, will never wear his scarlet coat again. In a few minutes two travelling carriages drive unostentatiously up to the door. Something wrapped up in a long travelling cloak is carried out of the house and put into the first carriage. It is fastened with straps into a corner, and a three-cornered hat is put on to the head and

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drawn well down over the face. A servant gets in beside it and three gentlemen into the second carriage. The coachmen drive on until they reach the barriers. The passports are in order, and the officials are told that the gentleman in the first carriage is old; he has fallen asleep and must not be disturbed. One of the men puts his head in at the window and sees that it is even so. The gentleman is leaning right back so sound asleep that he never moves. It is Voltaire, as dramatic in death as in life, and flying, in death, from the thunders of the church, whose wrath he had cheerfully incurred all his life. "Ecrasez l'Infame" had been his cry for half a century, and the priesthood had winced under his lash; but, for all that, his spirit had recoiled at the prospect of burial like a dog in unconsecrated ground, without prayer or ceremony. Twenty-four hours after death he was hurried out of Paris as we have seen, and buried at the Abbey of Scellières, in Champagne, just before the bishop of the diocese issued a mandate forbidding the interment. The bishop was too late, and Voltaire, if he was able to look down upon the scene, must surely have given vent to his wicked, mischievous chuckle as he saw how he had come off victorious in the struggle with his old enemy once more.

## CHAPTER V

### THE INVALIDES TO THE BOULEVARD ST. GERMAIN

WE have seen a little of the south side of the river already, in the stroll we took along the quays. Now we will plunge deeper into its streets and its history. We will make our way gradually from the Invalides on the west side, to the Jardin des Plantes on the east. We shall come across many a strange incident, many a tragedy, and many a romance *en route*. Our progress will be slow, for the romance of the streets cannot be recaptured by hurrying through them. By way of a beginning, we will take a tram to the Invalides, and go on foot from there to the Boulevard St. Germain. A description of the contents of the museum of the Invalides can be found in any guide book, so, leaving that out of the question, we will remain outside to see Napoleon's great funeral procession with the inward eye.

It was a bitterly cold day in the winter of 1840 that saw the final return of Napoleon to the banks of the Seine. Long before dawn huge crowds had assembled all along the route. Every window was filled with eager faces, and every tree had its load of shivering onlookers.

## BOULEVARD ST. GERMAIN

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At last, amid thunderous cries of "Vive l'empereur," the great procession came into sight. First to appear were the mounted gendarmes, with glittering breastplates and waving horse-hair crests; then the Garde Municipale, followed by the lancers; then the commandant of the National Guard of Paris with the whole of his staff. Behind these were divisions of infantry, cavalry and sappers, all with their colours and their bands. Then came a carriage escorted by officers of high rank, in which sat the chaplain who had been in charge of the body from the time it left St. Helena. Behind the carriage a groom led a charger, descendant of a stallion Napoleon had ridden. The marshalls of France, a gorgeous group with their medals and orders, came next. Behind them were carried the banners of the eighty-six departments of France, and then, at last, came the huge funeral car, draped with purple gauze, embroidered with golden bees. Hung all over with wreaths, emblems and flags, it was drawn onwards on its gilded wheels by eight horses, each one led by a groom in Buonaparte livery. At the four corners, holding tassels of the pall, were General Bertrand, who had shared the Emperor's captivity, two marshals and an Admiral, while the sailors of the "Belle Poule," in which the body had been brought home, marched on either side of the car with their captain, the Prince de Joinville, at their head. Behind

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their master rode a group of war-worn, elderly men, Napoleon's aides-de-camp, such as were still alive. Following the aides-de-camp marched the most pathetic part of the whole procession; all the aged veterans in Paris who had served under the Emperor. Lamé and blind some of them, one-armed, scarred with wounds, old and decrepit, wearing patched and faded uniform of a pattern long obsolete, marched all that was left of the men who had followed their master to Egypt, to Austerlitz, to Russia, to Waterloo; men of the Red Lancers, Mamelukes, Grenadiers, Chasseurs, Dragoons, and, above all, of the Old Guard.

At the entrance to the Invalides the leaden coffin was taken from the car by the sailors and carried into the Chapelle Ardente. "Sire," said the Prince de Joinville to his father, "I present to you the body of the Emperor Napoleon." "I receive it in the name of France," replied Louis-Philippe, taking the Emperor's sword, which Marshal Soult offered to him. "Vive l'empereur!" roared the multitude outside, but not a voice shouted "Vive le roi." The funeral was a blunder. The dying embers of imperial glory were stirred into a blaze by the sight of the golden bees, and the faded uniforms of the veterans. That blaze which consumed the monarchy of the Bourbons eight years later was only to be utterly extinguished by the pinchbeck brilliance of another Napoleon.

East of the Invalides is the Saint Germain quarter, where the aroma of a bygone aristocracy still clings to eighteenth century streets and old-fashioned hôtels, with courtyards and high walls to screen their gardens from the curious eye. It was somewhere in this quarter that Madame Scarron lived, after a certain eventful meeting with Madame de Montespan, which we shall hear more of later, had resulted in her appointment as governess to the King's illegitimate children. Writing to Madame de Grignan on December 4th, 1673, Madame de Sévigné says, "We supped again yesterday with Madame Scarron and the Abbe Têtu at Madame de Coulanges'. . . . Afterwards we thought of having a frolic, and conducting Madame Scarron at midnight to the very farthest end of the Faubourg Saint Germain, beyond Madame de la Fayette's, nearly as far as Vaugirard, quite in the country as it were. There she lives, in a fine, large house, the entrance to which is forbidden to everyone; there is a large garden, and very beautiful spacious apartments; she has a carriage, servants, and a most genteel table. She is dressed with quiet magnificence, as becomes a woman who lives among people of high rank and position. In herself she is pleasant, handsome, good, and free from all affectation; in a word, an excellent companion. We returned very merrily in the midst of torches, and in full security from thieves."



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This house, discreetly hidden away, "almost in the country," was the first step up the slippery ladder of court favour. The next was not slow to follow. The children were shown to Louis as soon as they were of an age to please him. The eldest, the little Duke de Maine, bright and quick-witted, won the heart of his father at once. They were acknowledged, given rooms at the court, and there settled with the excellent Madame Scarron in attendance. Her rise from the position of children's governess to king's wife belongs more to the history of Versailles than to Paris. Suffice it to say that one night in the winter of 1685, when all the court had retired to bed, Louis XIV and Madame Scarron, or Madame de Maintenon as she was called, were made man and wife by Père Lachaise, the King's confessor. The top of the ladder was reached at last.

Leaving the Esplanade des Invalides, by the Rue St. Dominique, we soon come to a group of buildings on the left side of the street: the Ministry of War. This was the site of the old Convent St. Joseph, in which the Marquise du Deffand had rooms. Married young to an unfaithful husband, she plunged deep into all the dissipations of the Regent's court. Being a woman of great intellectual capacity, mere dissipation did not hold her long. She considered matters seriously, and decided ten years after her marriage that she must "se ranger." To do this she separated

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from her husband, and started a *liason* with the President Hénault, a personable middle-aged man, the very type of the rich and lettered eighteenth century lawyer. Both of them had had many "affaires" by this time, and whatever passion there may have been between them cooled ere long to calm and pleasant friendship. The next episode in Madame du Deffand's life was the death of her husband, and her consequent accession of worldly goods. She was approaching the time of the "sere and yellow leaf" now, and she was thoroughly tired of the fashionable world, though she loved society. For some years past she had been living with her brother, a Canon of Sainte-Chapelle. Now, being possessed of comfortable means, she decided to set up an establishment of her own. A suite of rooms in the Convent Saint Joseph was vacant, one of those comfortable abodes in which unattached ladies could get all the advantages of such a respectable environment, without having to submit to any of the convent rules. The President still sat over her fire evening after evening, but he was merely a confidential friend in these days. Her chef was one of the worst in Paris—in fact, Hénault declared that the only difference between him and Madame de Brinvilliers, of whom more anon, was in the intention; but, notwithstanding that, d'Alembert, Turgot, Horace Walpole, Marmontel, and all her other friends flocked to the Convent

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St. Joseph whenever she "received." Altogether she had, as she thought, arranged the closing years of her life very comfortably.

Alas, for all her plans. Fate dealt her a crushing blow. She began to notice her sight was failing. In terror she sent for her physician. He could do nothing. Quacks and empirics of all kinds were tried one after another. Nothing could help her, and in a little while she was completely blind. The brilliant wits of her friends could offer her little comfort in this crisis, and in despair she left Paris to stay with her brother, Count Gaspard de Vichy, at the old family place of Champrond. While there she was attracted by a lonely, neglected young girl of two and twenty, Julie de l'Espinasse, the natural daughter of Gaspard de Vichy. These two unhappy spirits, the young girl and the blind old worldling of five and fifty, drew together at once. A brilliant idea came to Madame du Deffand. She would take Julie to live with her in Paris, to act as a friend and companion, to do a hundred and one things to ease her burden of blindness. When the subject was broached, Julie hesitated. She doubted the wisdom of the arrangement, but, as the only other alternative was unhappiness at Champrond, she consented, and in April, 1754, was introduced to all the habitués of the Salon in the Rue St. Dominique.

Madame du Deffand's favourite protégé was d'Alembert, the brilliant thinker. As soon as

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he saw the young girl, he fell head over ears in love with her. She liked him, and as time went on she gave him her trust, confidence, and sympathy, but more than that he never got. As time went on, too, Turgot and Marmontel began to feel the attractions of their old friend's companion. Though Julie was never a beauty she had personal charm, and she could draw out a guest when the older woman's acid humour petrified him into silence. Madame du Deffand soon noticed this, and the relations between her and Julie changed from friendship to hostility. Now the Marquise never left her room till six o'clock in the evening, and Julie seized the opportunity of asking her friends to come to a little private reception of her own, which she would give before the old lady appeared. One and all were charmed with the new idea; even old Hénault entered into it with all the vivacity of youth, creeping upstairs on tiptoe, and talking in low tones lest they should be overheard. Needless to say, they were discovered after a while. There was a terrible scene, which resulted in the banishment of Julie, and Madame du Deffand reigned alone in the Convent St. Joseph. Julie took up her abode in apartments in another house opposite in that same Rue St. Dominique. Her friends helped her financially, and she was soon able to hold a salon of her own, presided over by the faithful d'Alembert, who, after a bad illness, left his

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uncomfortable rooms in his foster-mother's house in the Rue Michel-le-Comte and took an apartment over Julie's, at her request. For twelve years this ménage continued. Just as fate had dealt the blow of blindness to the Marquise when she thought her future secure, so there was a blow in store for Julie de l'Espinasse. She fell in love, violent, passionate love, first with a young Spaniard, the Marquis de Mora, who secretly offered marriage, but who was carried off by consumption before any arrangements could be made; then with the Comte de Guibert, whose love for her was something like hers for d'Alembert. He took all she had to give, for she consented to become his mistress rather than lose him, and then heard from his own lips that his connection with her must cease, as he was just about to be married. Tossed about from one passion to another, Julie's health, never robust, was completely shattered. Her constant "crises de nerfs," so distressing to d'Alembert, continued one after another until she was fairly worn out by their violence. On May 22nd, 1776, Madame du Deffand probably pressed her thin, cynical lips yet more closely together when she was told that the blinds of her rival's windows were all drawn, and that Julie had died, as she had lived, in unhappiness, after long months of illness. Such, in brief, were the histories of the two passionate brilliant women whom Fate had thrown

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together so strangely, had separated after ten years, and condemned to live another ten as opposite neighbours, without exchanging the slightest sign of recognition.

The Rue St. Dominique leads into the Boulevard St. Germain, which will take us through so much history that we will not begin upon it now, but reserve it for another walk.



## CHAPTER VI

### TO THE LUXEMBOURG BY THE BOULEVARD ST. GERMAIN

WE have chosen this broad thoroughfare for our route to the Luxembourg, not because it is of interest in itself, but because it cuts through much historical ground, and in the course of our walk of about two miles we shall make constant divagations to right or left to conjure up the scenes of past days.

One of the first streets cut through is the Rue de l'Université, which housed many a great noble in bygone days, for we are now in the midst of the fashionable world of the eighteenth century. The narrow streets of the Marais on the north side of the river grew too close and confined for the aristocracy, who gradually came to see the advantages of the light, air, and space which could be obtained among the vineyards and waste ground beyond the walls on the south side. In due course, the wheel turned yet again; the old nobility either disappeared during the Revolution, or were too impoverished to keep up their great hôtels, and the new nobility housed themselves chiefly in the new avenues in and around the Champs Elysées, so that apartments in the

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old St. Germain houses came within the reach of artists and literary men. No. 25 housed Châteaubriand from 1816-1817; then later on Dumas had an apartment in the same building. Lamartine lived at No. 82 for twenty years, from 1835-1855, and many another name of note is connected with the old street.

A little further on and the Boulevard cuts ruthlessly through the Rue de Bac. When Catherine de Medicis was building the Tuileries she had the stone brought from the quarries of Vaugirard, well out in the country in those days. A rough track was made, leading down to the river, whither the heavy carts were drawn by straining oxen and horses to the "bac" or ferry-boat, which took the stone across to the new buildings. Long after carts and boat had been forgotten, the name lingered on until it was applied to the street that rose up on the site of the old lane.

No. 120 Rue du Bac saw the final scenes of a celebrated friendship. Châteaubriand lived here during the last years of his life, and here, when he was too feeble to go about, his old friend, Madame Récamier, visited him daily. The famous beauty of the Directory, familiar to all visitors to the Louvre as the white-robed sylph reclining on a rather comfortless sofa, had changed greatly since David painted her. Long since she had retired to rooms in the old Abbaye-aux-Bois, and now, in 1847,

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nearly blind with cataract, she never left them except to be led round to the house in the Rue du Bac, where, upstairs in the old man's room, she sat beside him, talking of days that were past, or thinking silently of the leaping flames which had now died down to the warm glow of intimate friendship. Day after day the same routine was followed, until death claimed the brilliant Châteaubriand in 1848. There was no need to lead the blind woman round to the Rue du Bac now. Her chief tie to life was loosened, and the next year she followed her old lover.

Passing on our way eastwards we will pause for a moment at No. 201 Boulevard St. Germain once the Hôtel de Luynes. The Duchesse de Chevreuse was one of the first of the nobility to tire of the Marais. She had the old hôtel, which had been the scene of constant intrigue in the early days of Louis XIV, pulled down in 1671, and sent her steward, Nicholas Vitart, to superintend the building of a new mansion of the St. Germain quarter. Nicholas, who was old, was only too glad to have the help of his nephew in overseeing workmen, paying accounts for gilding, upholstery, and so forth. Now this nephew's name was Racine. The Duchesse de Chevreuse is forgotten, the family of de Luynes who followed her is forgotten, but the young man who measured carpets, helped to carry in furniture, and settled quarrels among the workmen, has left a name which

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will live in the pages of literature and drama as long as Shakespeare's or Milton's.

We will pass on now to the Rue du Dragon. Victor Hugo had an attic at No. 30, after his mother's death left him without a home, but it is not for him that we turn down this street. It is to enter the quaint old Cour du Dragon, which opens out from it on the right. Here we step abruptly into the Paris of the middle ages. The narrow archway, over which a dragon perches, bearing a balcony upon his outspread wings, was once the Hôtel de Taranne in the days of Louis XI. It may be that the crafty old king himself has passed under the arch into the courtyard, though he generally preferred to sup incognito with his friends, the bourgeois of the old streets round Nôtre Dame. Bernard Palissy, the Huguenot and terra-cotta worker, whose art barely saved his skin from the flames of the Place de Grève, lived hereabouts, either in the court itself, or where his bust now stands at No. 24 Rue du Dragon. Even to-day the green shutters and the hammering of numerous locksmiths, who hang out the golden key sign over their doors, gives the court an old-world, forgotten atmosphere, very different to that of the Boulevard we have just left.

Instead of retracing our steps, we will go on down the Rue du Dragon till we come to the Croix Rouge, the meeting place of several streets with tales to tell. The Rue de Grenelle

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winds away westwards to the Invalides, and still remains much as it did in the days of its aristocratic tenants. No. 18, for instance, was the town house of the Beauharnais, and Josephine's feet have crossed the threshold many and many a time. But it is an association with a humbler personage that we would tell of to-day. On the 20th of March, 1730, Adrienne Lecouvreur, one of the finest actresses France ever saw, died in the Rue Visconti. She was only thirty-eight; she was kind as she was beautiful, and if she had loved the Maréchal de Saxe a little too well, it was no more than many another woman had done. When Voltaire had nearly died of smallpox a few years earlier, it was Adrienne who nursed him at the risk, not only of her life, but of her good looks, which were of even greater value to her. Now that her time had come, Voltaire sat at her bedside, filled with bitterness. She was dying in agony, for which no remedy could be found. Not a priest would confess her, for she was an actress. After four days' torture, she died unabsolved, and the curé of St. Sulpice refused to bury her. The body might be thrown out into the street, and would have been, had not M. Laubinière come to the Rue Visconti, where she had lived, and buried it secretly in the wilds of the Rue de Grenelle, behind some wood-yards where No. 115 now stands. This event had a deep effect upon Voltaire. It roused him to the



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merciless satire which he never failed to pour out upon the priesthood, and at the same time it gave him that horror of unchristian burial which led to his own strange exit from Paris nearly sixty years later, the exit we watched from the Quai Voltaire.

Next to the Rue de Grenelle, the Rue de Sèvres terminates at the Croix Rouge. No. 3 Rue Récamier, a turning to the right a few yards down it, is built on the site of the old Abbaye-aux-Bois, where, as we saw before, Madame Récamier lived in retirement for many years. The turning just beyond the Hôpital Laënnec for Incurables is the Rue Vanneau, where Renan lived from 1866-1876, but our business is with the hospital itself, No. 42 Rue de Sevres. Although it is a fine old building, dating back to 1634, our chief interest in it begins upon April 12th, 1796, when a working woman, Marie Jeanne Simon, was admitted. In a few days the inmates of the hospital knew that this woman was no other than the widow of Simon the cobbler, the guardian of the little Dauphin. Reproaches and abuses were heaped upon her by her companions, but Madame Simon insisted that the Dauphin was alive. He had been taken away from the Temple, she said, in a bundle of dirty linen, while another child, a deaf mute of the same size, had been brought in, hidden inside a pasteboard horse, to take his place. Her story at last attracted the



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attention of doctors and nurses, some of whom laughed at it, while others believed. She repeated it over and over again, and though her details were never clear, she seemed convinced that her "little Charles," as she called him, was still alive. It was in 1805, so goes the story, that Madame Simon was going over her history as usual, when a visitor at the hospital, a tall, foreign-looking woman, came up to her, and whispering under her breath, "Don't worry," passed on. Some weeks later, a young man, followed by a negro, passed through the dormitory, and made a sign of recognition to the poor woman, who vowed and declared afterwards that it was the Dauphin, her Charles. No one, in those days, cared to make much enquiry about the Bourbons, and the question was never taken up. At the Restoration the old woman was convinced that she would be sent for, and given some position which would put her beyond the reach of poverty to the end of her days. But she never was. The Government preferred to let sleeping dogs lie, and though several pseudo-Dauphins appeared, the old woman was never called upon to give evidence. At last, in 1819, she died in the Hôpital Laënnec. Her body was taken to the Vaugirard Cemetery, and there, it may be, is buried the true solution of a great historical mystery, for ever.

The next street converging at the Croix

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Rouge is the Rue du Cherche Midi. After seeing Madame Simon's shabby funeral leave the Rue de Sèvres, we might have strolled into this next street that same evening, and seen two figures walk slowly along to an old house at the corner of the Rue du Regard, just where it joins the Rue du Cherche Midi. As they approach nearer, the two are seen to be an elderly woman of aristocratic bearing, simply dressed, with a woollen shawl over her shoulders, and a tall slim youth of seventeen or eighteen. If we had noticed them with sufficient interest to ask who they were, anyone in the street could have told us that they were Madame Hugo, the wife of one of Napoleon's generals, and her young son, Victor; that they went like this every evening to the big corner house, the Conseil de Guerre, where the Commandant, M. Foucher, and his wife, lived. They were old friends of Madame Hugo's, our informant might have added, and it was chiefly in order to be near them that she had come to live in the Rue Cherche Midi. If we could have followed the mother and son into the Conseil de Guerre, we should have found them in one of the big comfortable rooms; the three old people, with their arm-chairs drawn up near each other, the two ladies busy with their work, while old Foucher smoked or read the paper, joining into the conversation every now and then. As for Victor, he remained a little apart, as did Adèle,

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the Fouchers' only daughter, listening, apparently, to their elders' conversation. Did it never dawn upon any of the old people that it was hardly natural for a young man like Victor to spend evening after evening listening to their talk? Did it never dawn upon them that Adèle seemed unusually ready to remain in the background without interrupting her elders? It seems so, for their amazement and annoyance was great when they found that the old house which Louis XIV had built for his illegitimate son, the Comte de Toulouse, was the scene of as hot and passionate a love as ever burnt within its walls when the loose morals of a bygone day gave free play to hot passions. But annoyance was of no avail. Obstacles were erected, only to be thrown down by the ardent Victor, and his marriage at St. Sulpice in 1822 was the result of those evening visits with his mother to the good old Fouchers.

The next street opening on to the Croix Rouge is the Rue du Vieux Colombier. Boileau lived for many years in this street, and his house was the constant meeting-place of his three great friends, Molière, Racine, and La Fontaine. The first-named would come from the Rue St. Honoré to forget his troubles awhile in discussing literature over a well-filled table. Racine had only a little way to walk, for he was then living in the Rue de Grenelle nearby. As for La Fontaine, his home was the magni-

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ficent Hôtel de Bouillon, now No. 17 Quai Malaquais, where the wealthy Duchesse de Bouillon, Mazarin's niece, protected him from the poverty which his brains did not suffice to keep at bay. In the Rue du Vieux Colombier, all outward associations fell away from the four friends. They were like boys again, ready to laugh at a jest, to drain their glasses, a little too frequently sometimes, by all accounts, and sit telling old tales or discussing new plays till daylight sometimes came round again to find them still talking.

The last of the six converging streets is the Rue du Four, and this takes us away from the huge wigs and silk stockings of the Grand Monarque's day, to the powderless hair and striped waistcoats of the Directory. At the corner of this street and the Rue des Canettes stood a perfumer's shop, kept by one Antoine Caron. In former days his trade had been most flourishing, but when a powdered wig was sufficient in itself to relieve the owner of any further trouble connected with either hair or head, and a whiff of scent was a sure passport to the foul air of a revolutionary prison, the perfumer's business languished until the splendours of the Empire restored it. Hence nearly all perfumers were royalists, and Caron was no exception to the rule. Having no wish to take the fatal journey to the Place de la Concorde, he lay low all through the Revolution, but later, when heads seemed

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firmer on their shoulders, he consented to shelter certain "good fellows," otherwise Chouans, whose conspiracies kept Napoleon's police in a highly nervous state for many a day. One after another the Chouan leaders were hunted down, but Georges Cadoudal was still at large. Time and again he changed his hiding place, but the net was drawing closely round him. At last, in desperation, his friends applied to Caron, who, though he began by refusing, was induced at last to harbour this dangerous guest and two of his friends. It was in the year 1804, and the Chouans were to arrive at eight o'clock on the evening of March 9th. Not a sign was there of their coming. Caron had gone out and had not returned. The housekeeper, Françoise, grew anxious, and sent her niece, Victoire, a mere child, to see what was happening. Victoire went down the Rue des Canettes, at the bottom of which, near St. Sulpice, was a broken-down cab and a foundered horse, with a crowd round it, but not a sight of the Chouans! This is what had happened. Cadoudal had got into the cab, unnoticed as he thought, in the Rue des Carmes, near St. Geneviève's Church, but all the Paris police were watching for him, and three of them pounced upon him in the Rue Monsieur-le-Prince. Cadoudal tried to escape by springing out of the cab, but after a desperate fight he was overpowered, and bound hand and foot. Meantime, the driver of



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the cab, another friend, Leridan by name, kept on at full gallop, hoping to save himself. He reached the Rue des Canettes, as we have seen, when the horse fell, and he, too, was captured. Caron was arrested, but was a clever enough man to appear a fool, in which he was so successful that not only did he escape execution with Cadoudal and his companions, but his sentence was limited to exile at Bourges under police surveillance. François was allowed to keep his business for him, and ten years later, when the Bourbons returned, Caron was hailed as a hero who had suffered much for the sake of the royal cause. Louis XVIII presented him with a medal, the Duchess d'Angoulême got him the position of "State Messenger," with rooms at the Palais Bourbon, and duties that consisted largely in wearing a velvet coat, a sword, and a plumed hat. He married François, and wore his velvet coat until 1831, when he died, well up in the eighties. Caron was never a very important person in any eyes but his own, yet, thanks to Balzac, he lives for ever, for Caron, and Caron alone, was the original of the famous César Birotteau.

We will go down the Rue des Canettes, where the cab-horse foundered, to St. Sulpice, where the fashionable world of the eighteenth century used to attend to listen to Lenten sermons by fashionable preachers, and having had their sins well castigated from the pulpit,



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returned home to commit a fresh crop with renewed gusto.

The fashionable world, with all its vices, its virtues, and its charms, had disappeared for ever when the old church was prepared for a wedding on December 29th, 1790. Camille Desmoulins had won his adored Lucille Duplessis at last, and all his friends, the makers of the early part of the Revolution, were there to see the ceremony. Sillery, Pétion, and Robespierre were there, and all three signed the register. The curé turned pale as he saw the three names which were looked upon as of ill-omen already, but the newly-married pair thought little of such things as they walked down the church, with the organ pealing behind them, and drove off to the Rue de l'Odéon (whither we shall follow them later), where a splendid wedding breakfast awaited the party. We shall soon see the storm clouds rolling up and overwhelming both bride and bridegroom in their fury, but for the present we will leave them to their prospect of a long life of unclouded happiness, while we have a look at the doings in St. Sulpice a few years later.

It is the year 1799. The Revolution is over, and Buonaparte's star is in the ascendant. Masillon and Bourdaloue, who thundered in eloquence upon the court ladies of Louis XIV's day, would have been struck dumb with amazement could they have looked down upon

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the scene of their labours. St. Sulpice is no more. That worn-out system called religion has been expelled from Paris, and we now have a Temple of Victory where Camille and Lucille were married. Long tables covered with plates, glasses, knives, fruits and meats of all kinds are prepared in the nave. Rough-looking men, moderately clean, talk rather more loudly than was formerly considered good breeding. At the head of one table, sits a bronze-faced little man, in a worn uniform, whose well-kept hands contrast favourably with the grimy appearance of the others. It is General Buonaparte, the most successful General in France, who is being feasted by the members of the Convention. What thoughts were passing through the mind, well masked by the impassive face, no one knew. If they had known, the general, instead of returning to the army and ever greater successes, would have lain that night in prison, and the next in six feet of Paris soil. Maybe his thoughts flashed back to the feast in St. Sulpice as he stood, five years later, upon the altar steps of Nôtre Dame, crowned Emperor of the French with all the pomp and splendour the Church could bestow.

We will leave St. Sulpice by the Rue Servandoni and stop, on our way to the Luxembourg, in front of No. 15. A tablet in the wall tells us that Condorcet wrote the "Esquisse des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain" here. In 1793 Madame Vernet, a sculptor's widow, lived in

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this house. From her windows she could hear the heavy rumble of wheels as the tumbrils carried their daily load of victims from the Luxembourg. At her door she could see a notice stating that any person giving shelter to the proscribed would be condemned to death at once. Yet, when she was asked if she would take in a proscribed man, she merely asked, "Is he a good man?" and on being answered in the affirmative, said, "Let him come at once." This was the way in which Condorcet, the revolutionary aristocrat, condemned by the very party whose cause he had always upheld, came to reside in the widow's house. For nine long months he remained there, never daring to go out, or even to show his face at the window, working all the time upon the "*Esquisse*," surveying human progress through the ages, and trusting firmly in the essential goodness of human nature, regardless of the tumbrils that rolled along the streets. In April, 1794, his work was finished. He knew that a domiciliary visit meant death to Madame Vernet and her servant, who brought him food, as well as himself. He said he was going away, and they tried to prevent him. They watched him, but he seized his opportunity and slipped out. The first person he met was a cousin of Madame Vernet's, who recognised him. At the risk of his life, this brave man insisted upon accompanying him to the gates, and setting him safely on the

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way to the open country. The rest of the story is well known, and, moreover, it does not concern the Rue Servandoni; how Condorcet applied to friends for shelter and was refused; how he wandered about the woods for two days until hunger drove him to an inn, where his white hands and his inability to give any account of himself aroused suspicion; how he was arrested and imprisoned, and how he poisoned himself in his cell. The philosopher had played a noble part in life, though sometimes a foolish one, yet his nobility is dimmed by the heroism of the sculptor's widow, and her servant, in the Rue Servandoni.

Just in front of us is the Luxembourg, the gardens of which, cool and flowery, invite one to rest a while, after so much history, before going on to discover more.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE LUXEMBOURG

IT was in 1612 that Marie de Medicis bought a great château and gardens on the outskirts of Paris, from the Duc de Piney-Luxembourg. The famous architect, Saloman Debrosse, was commissioned to design a magnificent palace, and when that was finished, Rubens was ordered to decorate one of the great reception rooms with huge allegorical paintings, representing the principal events in the royal owner's life. Debrosse's work is familiar to us chiefly through the exquisite fountain he designed, which still adorns the gardens of the Luxembourg, the only Renaissance gardens left in Paris. As to Rubens' contribution, who is not familiar with the portly presence of Marie de Medicis, "the fat bankeress," as Gabrielle d'Estrées had nicknamed her, in the Salle Rubens at the Louvre? Plots and intrigues, plans for securing the supreme power, must often have been laid in the great palace, or in the splendid garden which stretched far beyond its present limits. Of all the dreams she indulged in, the only one to come true was a nightmare she may have had when sleeping in one of the huge state beds within Debrosse's walls. How

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could she have foretold that death should find her, as it did, poor, exiled, forsaken by all but one servant, in a miserable attic over a cobbler's shop in Cologne, the very attic in which Rubens, the painter she patronised, had been born sixty years before?

For the best part of two centuries, until the Revolution, in fact, the Luxembourg remained a royal residence. Sometimes it served as a sort of Kensington Palace, where aristocratic dowagers or relatives of the king had apartments. The last direct descendant of the great house of Guise ended her days here in honourable seclusion. "La Grande Mademoiselle," thinking perhaps of the day when she lost a possible husband in the young Louis XIV, by turning the guns of St. Antoine upon his army, to save her beloved Prince de Condé, during the long-ago wars of the Fronde, also strolled among the gay flower beds in the evening of her somewhat disappointing life.

Later on, the Comte de Provence, afterwards Louis XVIII, was given the Luxembourg for his town house. Here it was that he waited anxiously in 1790 for the news of the Marquis de Favras' execution, for the Comte de Provence was deeply implicated in the royalist plot, for which Favras was to die. But the marquis was a nobleman and a gentleman. He died with lips sealed, and the Comte was saved. Another year passes, and he is en route for the frontier, more fortunate than his



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brother, Louis XVI, for he succeeds in getting there, and crosses safely into Germany, never to step on French soil again until the path is made smooth and safe by an allied army. Fatuous as all the later Bourbons were when prompt, energetic action was necessary, the Comte de Provence nearly lost all, his head included, by wishing to return, when well on his way out of Paris, to get a favourite gold snuff-box, which had accidentally been left behind.

The Luxembourg, left empty by the Comte, was highly suitable, when the mob had worked their will upon the furniture, for a Revolutionary prison, and it was within these walls, sacred to the senate to-day, that the last scenes in the drama of the Old Régime took place. This was an aristocratic prison, and rules of etiquette were observed with the strictness of Versailles. Our heads may fall to-morrow, but we will forget the prison bars in receiving visits from our friends to-day, was the spirit in which life went on. The ladies retired in the afternoon to a certain corner of the common living room, with their needlework in their hands, and seated themselves upon stools or benches, while the gentlemen stood by in the most elegant attitudes they could assume, or sat on the floor at the feet of their divinities. Card parties were arranged, from which a player might be called away never to return, in which case someone else quietly played his

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hand in his place. Flirtations, quarrels, poetry, games, *tableau vivants*, in which the grim scenes of the Revolutionary tribunal were acted, amid appreciative laughter from the audience. Anything to help either to forget the present or face the future was welcomed.

But there were times when even the splendid aristocratic equanimity was shaken. Let us quote a sentence or two from Carlyle;—“Nightly come the tumbrils to the Luxembourg with the fatal roll-call; list of the Fournée of to-morrow. Men rush towards the grate; listen if their name be in it. One deep-drawn breath when a name is not in; we live still one day! And yet some score or scores of names were in. Quick these, they clasp their loved ones to their heart, one last time; with brief adieu, wet-eyed or dry-eyed, they mount, and are away. This night to the Conciergerie; through the Palais, misnamed, of Justice, to the Guillotine, to-morrow.”

And those who went, who were they? The old Maréchal and Maréchale de Mouchy, both nearly eighty, mounted the tumbril together. “When I was seventeen,” said the old man to his friends at the Luxembourg, “I sprang to the saddle for my king; at seventy-eight I go to the scaffold for my God. My friends, I am not unhappy.” The Vicomte de Beauharnais, owner, as we saw before, of a fine house in the Rue de Grenelle, was another to go, leaving his wife, Josephine, behind, for a more

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brilliant and yet sadder destiny. Camille Desmoulins, torn from his Lucille, went the same way, though not so bravely as he might have done. Later on, Danton was to occupy the very prison to which he had sent so many victims. These are just a few out of the many who have looked sadly out of the windows of the Luxembourg.

The gardens, too, tell the same story. Turned into national property on the departure of the Comte de Provence, children played here then much as they do to-day. Then, when the palace windows were barred, and sentries guarded the doors, wives, sisters, mothers, friends of prisoners, disguised as countrywomen or good bourgeoises, began to haunt the gardens in order to catch a glimpse of some well-known face behind the bars. But the National Convention decided that these women were conspiring with the prisoners (a conspiracy against the Republic was a convenient excuse for anything that required an excuse), arrests were made, the gardens were closed, and sentries paced up and down the grass in front of the windows. Even now, in spite of sunshine, well-kept flower beds, unbarred windows, and general air of prosperity, it is not difficult to conjure up some of those poignant scenes of 1793 and 1794.

## CHAPTER VIII

### FROM THE LUXEMBOURG TO THE JARDIN DES PLANTES

LEAVING the Luxembourg gardens by the western entrance, a few steps takes us down the Rue de Fleurus into the Rue d'Assas. A few more steps will bring us to its junction with the Rue de Vaugirard. It is at the corner, No. 70 Rue de Vaugirard, to be correct, that we find the chapel of St. Joseph-des-Carmes, the chapel of the Carmelite convent, which was the scene of one of the most ghastly incidents of the Revolution, the massacre of nearly two hundred priests on Sunday, September 2nd, 1792. For upwards of three weeks they had been imprisoned in the Carmes, expecting daily to be deported. For several days past, however, sinister hints let fall by the turnkeys had been going the round of the prison, and when, on that fatal Sunday afternoon, they were all ordered out of the convent into the garden, they knew that death and not deportation was to be their lot. Whatever the faults of the clergy may have been, and they, no doubt, like the nobility, were far from faultless, one can do nothing but admire the way in which they faced a most horrible death. The old

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Archbishop of Arles, their leader, who had shared every discomfort and hardship of the prison with his lesser brethren, succeeded in inspiring the whole party with his own heroic calm, and for half an hour, while the shouts of the mob drew ever nearer, they paced up and down the garden paths or gave each other absolution. Then at last the crowd approached, the gates were broken down or opened by the jailors, and a herd of drunken assassins rushed in, sabre and pistol in hand. Seated by a fountain, Père Gérard remained absorbed in his breviary and never even looked up. He was the first to die. The Archbishop, meanwhile, had gathered a number of priests round him in an oratory at the far end of the garden, where they awaited their doom on their knees. "Where is the Archbishop?" shouted one of the murderers. The old man rose and went to the doorway, regardless of the remonstrances of his companions. "Let me pass," he said. "It may be that my blood will satisfy them." "Are you the Archbishop of Arles, you old blackguard?" was the cry with which he was greeted. "I am, messieurs," he replied calmly. "Then it was you who had the blood of good patriots shed at Arles?" "I have never had the blood of anyone shed, messieurs, nor have I knowingly injured anyone." "Well, then, I will injure you," was the savage response, followed up by a slash with a sabre across the old man's face. He



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staggered back, the assassins surrounded him, and pierced him through and through with their pikes. This was the signal for a general slaughter, and in a few minutes the garden was strewn with dead and dying priests. Some few lost their courage and tried to escape. Round and round the garden they were chased, in and out among the bushes, hunted down with howls of bloodthirsty madness until, one by one, they were caught and despatched. A few others, luckier than the rest, urged on by fear, managed to scale the ten foot garden wall and escape into the Rue Cassette, but of these, more than one, remorseful at leaving his comrades, climbed back again with magnificent self-sacrifice, to meet death with them in that shambles of a garden.

In order to turn to a happier subject, we may mention that No. 90 Rue Vaugirard was the first of Victor Hugo's homes as a married man. Here he brought his beloved Adèle Foucher, made his wife in spite of every obstacle, and here the young couple, of slender means, entertained their friends to the simplest of banquets, in the happiest of minds, before any clouds of estrangement connected with St. Beuve had arisen upon the horizon.

Retracing our steps along the Rue de Vaugirard in front of the Luxembourg, we come to the Rue de Tournon, where Théroigne de Méricourt, grown rich upon the proceeds of anarchy, and well paid for her share in the



## FROM THE LUXEMBOURG TO

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said anarchy by Philippe Egalité, Duke of Orleans, lived in considerable style, even keeping a carriage. Among the leaders in every outrage, from the taking of the Bastille to the invasion of the Tuileries, the brown-haired virago met with poetic justice, when, more like an animal than a woman, she glared in madness at visitors from behind the bars of her cell in the Salpêtrière. What mind she had was completely unhinged by the bloody orgies in which she had partaken, and for four and twenty years she lived on, forgotten by all who had known her, a dangerous lunatic in the great asylum.

The corner house of the Rue de Tournon and the Rue de Condé occupies the site of Clément Marot's home. The Huguenot writer, the translator of the Psalms, the follower of Calvin, makes a strange contrast to the ferocious Théroigne.

We will turn up the Rue de Condé into the Place de l'Odéon, to see a third floor apartment in No. 38 Rue de l'Odéon, with windows looking into the Rue Crébillon. It is a well-known story, how Camille Desmoulins looked across from his window at No. 38 to a house in the Rue de Condé (now No. 22), and saw a pretty young girl playing in a balconied room on the second floor; how he followed her when she went with her mother to the Luxembourg gardens, and how eventually he made her his wife. We have looked in upon their wedding

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at St. Sulpice, and now we see them coming home to the Rue de l'Odéon (Rue du Théâtre Français it was then), to the wedding breakfast which Camille had prepared for his friends. That was on December 29th, 1790. For three years and three months the apartment saw nothing but happiness. Camille, the "enfant terrible" of the Revolution, as he has been called, revelled in its workings. Insensible to ghastly tragedies, he wrote himself blind and talked himself hoarse all day, and returned in the evening to perfect peace with his Lucille. At the end of three years and three months, on March 20th, 1794, the well-known tramp of feet was heard below; the terrible "Open in the name of the Republic," followed a heavy knock at the door, and Camille was arrested. He struggled, lost control of himself, screamed and raged, but to no purpose. With hands tied, he was led off to the Luxembourg nearby. On April 5th he was guillotined, amid shouts and jeers from the populace who had flattered and applauded him so short a while before. A week later Lucille followed him, but the tumbrils and the Place de la Concorde held no terrors for her. She saw them merely as the shortest path to Camille.

Following the Rue de l'Odéon to its junction with the Boulevard St. Germain, we come to the Rue de l'Ecole-de-Médecin. This old street has been ruthlessly cut across by the Boulevard, which threw down the house in



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wife of Louis XII, and killed the good-natured old man with the gay life to which he was quite unaccustomed, lived here for a while, so did James V of Scotland, when he came to Paris to woo his first wife, Madeleine of France, who died of consumption a few months after her marriage. As to the present contents of the Musée de Cluny, it is a most fascinating medley of all those objects, shoes and snuff-boxes, beds and carriages, carvings and church ornaments, keys and combs, which help to reconstruct the life and surroundings of a past age.

On leaving the Cluny we enter the scholar's quarter, the region of the Sorbonne and the various Lycées, where all the learning of France has been accumulated and dispensed, from the days of Robert de Sorbon, the confessor of St. Louis in 1253. But as this is not a guide book in the usual sense of the word, we will pass on down the Rue St. Jacques, the old Roman road from the south, along which Christianity was brought to Paris by Dionysius, Rusticus, and Eleutherius at the end of the third century; their reward for so doing being the usual one, namely, martyrdom. The Rue de Cimetière St. Benoît, a turning to the left from the Rue St. Jacques, is all that is left of the mediæval church and cloister of St. Benoît. Here it was that François Villon, the scamp, poet and guttersnipe, was educated by one of the canons, who bestowed his name upon the waif. The poor man must have thought

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himself ill rewarded for his pains, for Villon was never out of some discreditable scrape or other. His crowning act was the murder of a priest in these very cloisters, which severed his connection with the place for ever. Yet by the usual irony of fate, the good old canon is forgotten, and the rascally Villon, who bore his name, goes down to posterity as an amusing scoundrel, a poet by nature, and the father, in literature, of a great son, François Rabelais.

Continuing a little further southwards along the Rue St. Jacques, we turn to the left again, along the Rue Cujas, not because it has any particular interest of its own, but it takes us past two famous buildings, the Panthéon on the right hand, and the church of St. Etienne du Mont on the left, where the Rue Cujas becomes the more venerable Rue Clovis. Designed originally for the reception of a magnificent tomb to St. Geneviève, turned at the Revolution into a Temple of Fame for the reception of the bodies of great men, re-consecrated when Napoleon restored religion in 1806, re-secularised in 1830, consecrated all over again in 1851, and secularised all over again in 1885, the resulting Panthéon is a somewhat cheerless, dreary place in which even the tombs of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Victor Hugo fail to arouse one's interest to any great extent. Mirabeau was the first tenant of the Temple, but his tenancy was short; one night he was exhumed, and hastily

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re-buried in the cemetery of St. Catherine, away in the suburb of St. Marceau. The murdered Marat took his place, but in three months he, too, was removed to some unmarked spot in the graveyard of St. Etienne du Mont close by. If anything will serve to give a little colour to this gloomy abode of the famous dead, it is Carlyle's account of Mirabeau's funeral procession. "On the . . . 4th of April (1791) there was a solemn public funeral; such as deceased mortal seldom had. Procession of a league in length; of mourners reckoned loosely at a hundred thousand. All roofs are thronged with onlookers, all windows, lamp-irons, branches of trees! Sadness is painted on every countenance, many persons weep! There is a double hedge of National Guards; there is National Assembly in a body; Jacobin Society and Societies; King's Ministers, Municipals, and all Notabilities, Patriot or Aristocrat. . . . Slow-wending, in religious silence, the procession of a league in length, under the level sun-rays, for it is five o'clock, moves and marches with its sable plumes: itself in a religious silence; but by fits with the muffled roll of drums, by fits with some long-drawn wail of music, and strange new clangour of trombones, and metallic dirge-voice; amid the infinite hum of men. In the church of St. Eustache, there is funeral oration by Cerutti; and discharge of fire-arms, which brings down pieces of the plaster. Thence, forward again



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to the church of St. Geneviève, which has been consecrated by supreme decree, on the spur of this time, into a Panthéon for the Great Men of the Fatherland. . . . Hardly at midnight is the business done; and Mirabeau left in his dark dwelling; first tenant of the Fatherland's Panthéon."

We will leave this gloomy burial place and go on to St. Etienne du Mont, one of the finest old churches in Paris, within which Pascal, Racine, and Boileau were buried. Close to the church is the old tower of Clovis, which once formed part of the mediæval abbey of St. Geneviève, a huge church founded by Clovis in the cloisters of which the scholars of early days met their pupils and delivered lectures.

We go southwards now down the Rue du Cardinal Lemoine at the end of the Rue Clovis. No. 49 was once the hôtel of Charles Le Brun, the artist. Pupil of Poussin, protégé of munificent Fouquet, friend of Colbert, the ball was at Le Brun's feet, ready, apparently, to be rolled whithersoever he pleased. As Director of the factory of Les Gobelins, which owed much of its prosperity to him, he made a large fortune; as Chancellor of the Academy, he had a splendid position in the world of art and learning. He bought a magnificent estate on the outskirts of Paris, of which this house is the sole survival, and here he worked, entertained his friends, and enjoyed the good gifts

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Providence had showered upon him to the full. Fouquet fell, but Colbert rose, and Le Brun's favour was higher than ever. Then round went Fortune's wheel. Colbert died, and Louvois reigned in his stead. Louvois had a protégé of his own, namely, Mignard, who was brought forward at the expense of the former favourite. Le Brun had time to design a splendid tomb for Colbert in the church of St. Eustache, and then he, too, died (of a broken heart, said his friends), and the house on the outskirts of Paris was sold, its fine gardens and alleys to be cut up, in due course, for streets and building sites.

Just where the Rue du Cardinal Lemoine is crossed by the wide and uninteresting Rue Monge, stood Ronsard's house. Pierre de Ronsard was the child of fortune, an aristocrat, as every line of his handsome face shows, and a child of the Renaissance. In his youth he had been a page to the Duke of Orleans; he had gone to Scotland in the train of Madeleine of France when she married the Scottish king; in later life he was appointed tutor to Mary Stuart, and Charles IX could hardly do without him. But this courtier par excellence was in love with the music of words. To enrich the French vocabulary he and his companions, the six other poets of the famous Pleïade, ransacked the classics for new words, which they proceeded to mould into verse of a form new and delightful to the ear. In hours stolen

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from duties at court, Ronsard's tall figure might be seen strolling in the meadows by the river, or coming home on a summer's evening through country lanes to that luxurious house and spacious garden of his, which once covered the street in which we are standing. Something unreal there may have been about him, enhanced perhaps by the presence of a richly-dressed page, following his master with a basket of luscious peaches or grapes, something which has little akin with St. Bartholomew's Day, the Wars of the League, or the intrigues of Catherine de Medicis' court, but it is pleasant to leave the realities of blood and treachery to watch Ronsard for a few minutes wandering in the shady alleys of his garden, thinking of nymphs and shepherds in sylvan groves, or pondering over his favourite maxim, "Nourish lofty conceptions, such as do not drag upon the earth."

Following, still southwards, along the Rue Monge, we come to the Rue Rollin, the first turning to the right. At the corner house is a tablet marking the site of the house in which the great Pascal lived and died, while No. 4 Rue Rollin was the home of Bernadin de St. Pierre. Here, most likely, he wrote "Paul et Virginie," which became such a success as had seldom been seen since those lengthy novels of Mdlle. Scudéry's sent the frequenters of the Hôtel de Rambouillet into ecstasies of sentimental delight. Just before "Paul et

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Virginie " was published, St. Pierre was requested to read the MSS. to a select company assembled at Madame Necker's for the occasion. To his horror, he observed covert yawns and sighs from the audience. He read on, and the general boredom increased. At last the unfortunate author could stand it no longer. Without a word of explanation, he stopped abruptly, crammed the MSS. into his pocket, rushed from the room, down the stairs, and away to his house in the Rue Rollin in such despair that he was ready to destroy the unlucky MSS. on the spot. Yet this was the book which went into edition after edition in pretty nearly every language in Europe, and has since been reckoned one of the masterpieces of French fiction.

Opposite the Rue Rollin, on the left side of the Rue Monge, is the Rue de Navarre, along which we may go to look at the Arènes de Lutèce, the third century amphitheatre, which, with the Baths at the Cluny, forms one of the few remaining relics of the Roman occupation. Continuing our way along the Rue de Navarre to the Rue Lacépède, we soon find ourselves in the Jardin des Plantes, where a seat under the trees will be a pleasant change from the streets we have wandered up and down on our way from the Luxembourg.

But while we are in this region of Paris, we may well make an expedition, still further south, to a place little known by visitors to

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Paris. We will leave the Gardens by the Rue Geoffroy, go down the Rue St. Hilaire, until we come to a turning on the right, the Rue du Fer à Moulin. No. 17 of this street, the amphitheatre d'Anatomie, stands on the site of the old Hôtel Clamart, the gardens of which were turned into a cemetery, and it is somewhere here that Mirabeau's remains were hastily and unceremoniously buried one night three years after that magnificent funeral at the Panthéon, which we saw through the eyes of Carlyle.

But we have not come here to look for Mirabeau's ashes, but for the Boulangerie des Hôpitaux et Hospices, No. 13 Place Scipion, about half-way down the Rue du Fer à Moulin. Once again we must sweep away all the present surroundings; we must forget about bakers and hospitals, about streets and tenements. We must go back to the days of Catherine de Medicis, in order to see a richly-dressed Florentine banker, a good-looking fellow, though with something of craft in his countenance perhaps, watching an army of workmen labouring to finish this very building, now a bakery, which we are looking at to-day. Around the house are gardens through which a little river ripples pleasantly on its way to the Seine, and beyond the gardens are vineyards, woods and fields; in very truth, a Paradise of a place. The Florentine's name is Scipio Sardini, and he had come to Paris to

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PARIS IN THE TIME OF PHILIP AUGUSTUS.

[Gauthier.





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seek his fortune just at the time when the death of Henry II put the reins into the capable hands of Catherine de Medicis. Scipio was a man after her own heart; pleasant to deal with, an astute financier, clever and quite unscrupulous in anything he undertook; he was able to hide his cleverness under a mask of frivolity and wit when necessary, and soon became an indispensable member of the Queen's court. Only one thing was desired, namely, a brilliant marriage, by which his low origin might be forgotten and a powerful family be founded. At that time the Queen's "Flying Squadron," her maids of honour, "All of them capable of setting the whole world on fire," as Brantôme said, numbered in their ranks Mdlle. de Limeuil, as fair, as well born, and as gay as anyone could desire. The greatest nobles of the court were at her feet, and to one of them, the Prince de Condé, she surrendered her somewhat frail virtue. At Dijon, in the midst of one of the Queen's receptions, Mdlle. de Limeuil was unexpectedly delivered of a son. "It is inexplicable," comments one of the memoir-writers of the period, "that such a prudent woman should have so miscalculated." At any rate, she had miscalculated, and there was a scandal. The Queen, who took care not to enquire too closely into the vagaries of the Maids of Honour so long as their affairs did not result in publicity, was furious. The fair Limeuil

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was imprisoned, and Condé, who would have avowed his share in the affair, was persuaded by the Protestants to throw her over. At this juncture Scipio Sardini, one of the richest men in the realm, came forward and offered to wed the tarnished beauty. Her family accepted the offer, and the Florentine brought his bride home to his new mansion on the banks of the little river Bièvre.

What their subsequent lives were is unknown. Maybe she rebelled at being thus thrown into the arms of the low-bred Italian, and never ceased to mourn for her numerous admirers at the court, or perhaps she settled down, like a wise woman, to enjoy the pictures, books, and beautiful Italian work with which her husband filled the house, and to enter into his schemes for perfecting the gardens and orchards, till there were none near Paris to equal them. Now the grounds have long since disappeared; the house is a bakery, and the Bièvre, which we may catch a glimpse of here and there, its water fouled and sullied with dye from Les Gobelins and the drainings of the tanneries, creeps along, chiefly through tunnels to mingle its dishonoured stream with the waters of the Seine.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ILE ST. LOUIS TO ST. GERMAIN DES PRÈS

BEFORE we leave the south side of the river to explore the north, we have one more walk to take, in the Ile St. Louis, and that network of streets, between the quays and the Boulevard St. Germain, to pick up some of the details which had to be excluded from the earlier chapters. We will begin at the Ile St. Louis, therefore, as being the most convenient starting point, and work our way westwards once more until, at St. Germain des Près, we find ourselves in the Boulevard St. Germain, close to where we left it in order to go down the Rue du Dragon to the Croix Rouge on our way to the Luxembourg.

As regards the island itself, it has seen but little history compared to its neighbour the Ile de Cité, but it is distinguished in the first place by having been the scene of a strange combat between a man and a dog in the fourteenth century. According to an old historian, a certain gentleman, Aubri de Montdidier by name, was crossing what was then the wild forest of Bondi, unaccompanied except for his dog, when he was mysteriously assassinated and buried at the foot of a tree. Two or three

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days later a great barking and howling was heard outside the house of one of Montdidier's friends. The servants, recognising the dog as Montdidier's, sent to tell their master. The moment he appeared the dog rushed at him, seized him by the clothes, and made as if to drag him away. In fact, its whole behaviour was so curious that the friend, who never remembered seeing it without its master, called some of his servants and set off to follow whither it led. For five miles the dog went straight ahead until they reached the forest, then, at the foot of a certain tree, it began whining and scratching the ground. Spades were fetched, and in a few minutes poor Montdidier's body was brought to light. Not a trace of the murderer could be discovered, and after a while the hue and cry died down. Then one day the dog, which had attached itself to Aubri's friend, catching sight of a certain Chevalier Macaire, flew at him, and seized him by the throat. Someone rushed up and beat the animal off, but the same thing happened whenever Macaire appeared. At last the story came to the ears of the king, Charles V, and he ordered the dog to be brought before him. As usual, it was perfectly gentle and quiet with all who approached, until the Chevalier came forward, when only its chain prevented it flying at him. It was remembered that there had been considerable enmity between Macaire and Montdidier, and suspicion grew apace.

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In those days, if an accusation was made, but no proofs were forthcoming, the law allowed accuser and accused to fight a duel. Therefore, Charles decided that the dog had a right to demand satisfaction of the Chevalier. The idea of a novelty was as pleasing to the fourteenth as to the twentieth century mind. and arrangements were soon made. The Ile St. Louis, then an uninhabited waste, was the place of combat; lists were put up, and the whole court attended. Macaire was given a club, and the dog a kennel to which it could retire if hard pressed. The signal was given, the dog was unleashed, and went straight for the Chevalier, who, unnerved at the prospect of such an unusual adversary, was on the ground in a few minutes, with the animal worrying his throat. Half dead with terror, he screamed to the list attendants to pull the dog off, for he would confess all, and there, at the King's feet, he acknowledged the murder, and begged for mercy. The historian omitted to tell what happened either to him or the dog, but the story will serve to give colour to what is, on the whole, rather a dull part of Paris.

Although history generally passed the island by, it contains several fine old houses, two of which have tales to tell us before we return to the mainland. No. 17 Quai d'Anjou was once the Hôtel de Lauzun, built for the little man who made so much noise in Madame de Sévigné's day. Anyone who has read those



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inimitable letters of hers will remember the amazement with which Paris heard of the engagement between the Duc de Lauzun and "La Grande Mademoiselle," the king's first cousin, a Princess of the Blood. "Here is a glorious matter for talk," says Madame de Sévigné. "If you should cry out, if you are beside yourselves, if you say we have told you a lie, that it is all false, and we are making fools of you, that it is a pretty jest, that invention is flat and dull; in fact, if you abuse us, we shall think you quite right, for we have done just the same ourselves."

Twenty-four hours saw the beginning and the end of the wonder, for Louis XIV, persuaded to give his consent reluctantly, was persuaded, with less difficulty, to withdraw it again, and the marriage never took place; at least, it was never acknowledged. As to Lauzun, his character would have suited a minor Voltaire; always in trouble, full of audacity, cynical, witty, he was feared by all who came in contact with him, and yet admired as well. His exploits were the talk of the whole court, more especially one which was repeated in almost tremulous whispers, of how, having requested Madame de Montespan to ask the King some favour for him, he actually dared to hide under the bed in Madame's room, and listen to all that passed between her and her royal lover, to ascertain whether she kept her promise or not. In consequence of these

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little doings, Lauzun departed to the fortress of Pignerol, where he spent a considerable number of years, so that, what with one thing and another, the time he actually spent in the house he had built on the Quai d'Anjou cannot have been very long.

The Marquis de Marigny, né Poisson, brother of Madame de Pompadour, lived in it in the next reign. He was a good fellow, with a considerable amount of mother-wit, who put up with the sneers caused by his title and his origin with equanimity. When created a marquis he took the title of "d'Avandière," from some property he possessed. The courtiers promptly nicknamed him the "Marquis d'Avant Hier" (of the day before yesterday), which so infuriated his sister that she made him change his title to Marigny. "What would you have," he replied, "once a fish (Poisson) always a fish, and now they will call me M. de Marinier."

A hundred years later the old hôtel was let out into apartments, where artists, students, and writers lived a happy Bohemian life together. Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier, Méry, Gerard de Nerval, Daubigny, Barye, Corot, and George Sand, all found lodging under its ample roof. Good humour and poverty went hand in hand there, and the old walls looked down upon numerous riotous scenes, some innocent and some the reverse, while upon one occasion certainly, Balzac came here to sample

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the newly-discovered joys of opium smoking. If the Hôtel Lauzun belonged to a minor Voltaire, the Hôtel de Lambert, now No. 2 Rue St. Louis-en-l'Isle, sheltered the old cynic himself before his final banishment. Here, he and Madame du Châtelet lived, when they could tear themselves away from mathematics and tree-planting at Cirey. Voltaire could never remain in the background wherever he was, and though he professed to dislike the Paris life of "Supping when I ought to be in bed, going to bed and not sleeping, getting up to race about, not doing any work, deprived of real pleasures and surrounded by imaginary ones," he threw himself heart and soul into all that was going on. Writing and studying all the morning, visiting in the afternoon, entertaining or the theatre in the evening, such was the routine, and never could there have been a more brilliant host and hostess than Voltaire and his "divine Emilie" when they kept their guests, forgetful of time, deep in philosophical discussion, or piled epigram upon epigram, *jeu d'esprit* upon *jeu d'esprit*, until the lackeys below listened in open-mouthed wonder to the chorus of laughter that floated down to them.

We will leave the island by the Pont de la Tournelle. It was probably about the time that Voltaire was at the Hôtel Lambert and Marigny at the Hôtel de Lauzun, that the following letter was written:—"I learn that

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the Dauphin and Dauphiness went into Paris to-day to go to Nôtre Dame. When they passed the Pont de la Tournelle, more than two thousand women, who had assembled there, shouted to them, "Give us bread, Monseigneur! We are dying of hunger! Give us bread!" The Dauphine trembled from head to foot, and the Dauphin, calling to Chazeron, who was on horseback, in command of the guards, gave him his purse, telling him to distribute the contents as he thought best, for he did not dare to throw money about publicly without the king's permission. But when Chazeron had given a few louis, the women cried out: 'We do not want your money, Monseigneur; we want bread. We love you well enough. Make them send away that — who governs the kingdom and is bringing it to ruin. If we only had her here, there would soon not be enough left of her to make relics of.' " The letter is sufficiently eloquent to need no comment, unless it is that it was a strange irony of fate which let a Louis Quinze, a Pompadour, a Duc de Richelieu, and many another die peacefully in their beds, while the long-delayed storm burst over the heads, chiefly of the innocent.

A turning to the left from the Quai de la Tournelle, once a favourite promenade for fashionable Parisians, brings us into the Rue de Pontoise, where the house called No. 30 to-day marks the entrance to the ancient

## THE ILE ST. LOUIS TO

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seminary of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet, where Calvin studied in the days before religion led him to seek a refuge at Geneva. Continuing our course alongside the river, we come to the Quai de Montebello and turn down the narrow Rue Maître Albert in search of one of those curious little historical details in which the streets of Paris are so rich.

In the early years of the Bourbon restoration an old negro of unprepossessing countenance, dirty, haggard, and half starved to boot, might have been seen slinking down this squalid street, eyed askance by all who passed, hooted by the children until he gained the shelter of some low eating house. Who was he? He had been flattered in his day by fine ladies, bribed by great lords, cajoled by princes of the church, played with and teased by a king. He had been familiar with the luxury of Versailles, and was now going to seek some filthy bed in a tramp's lodging house. He had eaten food prepared for the royal table, and now he had to get the garbage of a low cabaret. He had been caressed by the woman who once ruled not only all France, but the king as well, and now the commonest street-walkers shrank from him. He was Zamore, the black servant of Madame du Barry! The Revolution found him a useful tool, and the Terror made him one of its Municipal Officers. When his former mistress, who had got safely out of France, was foolish enough to return in the



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hope of getting back her jewels, Zamore betrayed her, and sent her to the guillotine. It was even said that he followed behind the tumbril that took her to the Place de la Concorde, listening unmoved to her agonised cries for mercy. Cast off at the end of the Terror, Zamore sank lower and lower, until at last he came to the very depths of human misery in a filthy hole in No. 13 of this gloomy street, shunned, as we saw, by all he came in contact with. Maybe poor du Barry's screams were in his ears when he died, worn out with misery and starvation on February 7th, 1820.

The Rue Maître Albert leads to the Place Maubert, a narrow cul-de-sac off which is named the Impasse Maubert, and has a connection with the poisoning case which electrified seventeenth century Paris. It was here that Gaudin de Sainte Croix, the accomplice of Madame de Brinvilliers, had a laboratory in which he prepared the famous "succession powder," a mixture of rarefied arsenic, vitriol, and toad's venom, which Madame used with such deadly effect upon her relatives. But as we shall tell the full story when we come to the Hôtel de Brinvilliers on the other side of the river, we will pass on, up the Rue Lagrange till we come to the Rue des Anglais. We are now back once more in the great days of French learning, when students were sent from all over the world to attend the lectures at the University of Paris, and this was the quarter



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of the English students. The next turning is the Rue Dante, where, according to tradition, the great Italian himself lodged when he studied in Paris. In those days it was a narrow lane, known as the Rue du Fouarre, from the straw-market near by, from which the scholars brought bundles of straw to sit on in their cold cheerless class-rooms. One of Dante's principal friends in Paris was Jean de Meung, the completor of the "Roman de la Rose," begun by Guillaume de Lorris, and known to us chiefly through Chaucer's English version. Many a time must Dante have left his gloomy quarters in the Rue de Fouarre, walked up the Rue Galande, still containing many ancient houses, and made his way down the great Roman Rue St. Jacques, out into the country to de Meung's house (No. 218 is said to cover the site). Even in these days, coming out of the Rue Galande, we find ourselves, as he would have done, in front of the church of St. Séverin.

The guide books will give the details of this old church, largely thirteenth century work, and they will very likely add that it was used as a powder magazine during the Revolution, but there is a curious little incident in connection with the churchyard, which only the older historians have recorded. It was the scene of one of the first surgical operations performed in France. It was in January, 1474, relates Poullain de St. Foix, that the physicians and surgeons of Paris repre-

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sented to Louis XI that as several "persons of consideration were then suffering from stone, colic, and other internal maladies," it would be of the greatest benefit if, in order to trace the disease and discover a cure, the said physicians and surgeons were permitted to operate upon a living man. The request was granted, the prisons were searched until an archer was found suffering from the required malady and condemned to be hanged for theft as well. He was taken to the churchyard of St. Séverin, and there, with a flat tombstone for an operating table, amid a large concourse of people, the surgeons set to work. Contrary to their expectations, the patient not only survived the operation, but was pronounced cured in fifteen days time. In consideration of his services he was pardoned and set free.

To the south of the church is the Rue de la Parchmenerie, which brings us back to the Sorbonne scholars once more, for here it was that the parchment for their use was prepared and sold, and here, too, a couple of old houses, now Nos. 6 and 7, once belonged to the canons of Norwich Cathedral, who maintained therein a number of English students. North of the church, the Rue St. Séverin, another ancient and now somewhat unsavoury street, leads us into Boulevard St. Michel. We cross the Boulevard and go down the Rue St. André des Arts, which saw bloody deeds during that struggle between the Burgundian and Orleanist

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factions which ravaged the unhappy country for so many years. The city wall with one of its gates, the *Porte de Buci* (the present *Rue de Buci* crosses its site) terminated the *Rue St. André des Arts*. On the night of May 29th, 1418, when the Armagnacs held the city of Paris, Perrinet Leclerc, the son of the keeper of the *Porte de Buci*, crept into his father's room, stole the keys from under his pillow as he lay asleep, and treacherously opened the city gates to the Burgundian forces outside. Up the streets they swarmed, joined largely by the mob which had the alternative of butchering or being butchered, and preferred the former. Two Archbishops, six Bishops, several Councillors and Presidents of Parliament, the Chancellor and the Constable were all murdered in the course of the next few days; the whole affair being a fair sample of the many disasters brought upon France by a king too weak to hold the great nobles in check.

Close to the scene of Perrinet Leclerc's treachery, the *Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie* turns southward on our left. At No. 14, in this street, in the courtyard of an old mansion, were once the premises of the *Théâtre Français*. The king's comedians played "*Phèdre*" and "*Le Médecin Malgré Lui*" here on April 18th, 1689, and here they continued to play until their removal to the *Odéon* in 1782. In the eighteenth century the Encyclopædists, Voltaire, Diderot, Grimm, d'Holbach, and

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d'Alembert were often seen leaving the theatre to adjourn to the famous Café Procope to discuss the play over a cup of that still novel drink, which the Italian Procopio made so perfectly.

The Rue St. André des Arts leads, as we saw, to the Rue de Buci, which, in its turn, takes us to the Rue Bourbon-le-Château, the scene of a grim murder some seventy or more years ago. Living in No. 1 of this street were two women who, on December 23rd, 1850, were found murdered in one of the rooms. One of them, Mdlle. Ribault, was a designer on the staff of a paper, the *Petit Courrier des Dames*, edited by a certain M. Thiéry. This woman, left lying on the floor by the murderer, was just able, by dipping a finger in her own blood, to trace in rough, shaky letters on the wall, "The assassin is the clerk of M. Thie——," when, the effort being too much for her, she fell back dead. The next day the police arrested Thiéry's head clerk, Laforcade by name, who, on being confronted with the fatal writing, confessed the double crime, and paid the penalty for it.

Following the Rue Bourbon-le-Château, we reach the celebrated abbey church of St. Germain des Près, one of the oldest churches in Paris, with a nave dating from the eleventh century, and end our walk in the Boulevard of the same name not far from the Rue du Dragon, where we left it three chapters back.

## THE NORTH SIDE

### CHAPTER X

#### THE HOTEL DE VILLE TO THE BASTILLE

HAVING seen something of the south side of the river, the section of Paris given over, in former days, to learning and scholarship, we will now have a look at what was once the residential quarter, where, in narrow, crooked streets, the odours of the cheap eating house issue from what was once the salon of a great lady of the Valois days, and a fine coat of arms surmounts the entrance to what is now a rookery of poor lodgings. Starting from the Hôtel de Ville, which makes a convenient centre, we pass the church of St. Gervais, enter the Rue François Miron, and find ourselves on the outskirts of the Marais, the old marshy land on the north of the Seine, which, when drained, became the aristocratic quarter of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The Ile de Cité had long since been found too small to hold the court and the nobility, and the south side held few of the big hôtels as yet.

We will pause for a moment at an old house, No. 68 Rue François Miron, to hark back to



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the seventeenth century, join a noble company, and look down on a magnificent procession. The stonework of this house, the Hôtel de Beauvais it is called, still fresh and new, is nearly hidden by the costly tapestries and rich materials, with which the façade is draped. Down below, men-at-arms keep the middle of the street clear by the simple expedient of backing their horses against the crowd whenever it becomes too restive. But the crowd is good-humoured; it bandies rough chaff with the soldiers, and, moreover, it has something to stare at on the balconies of the Hôtel de Beauvais. A great state coach rolled along the street to the house a little while before, and is now standing empty in the courtyard, while the occupants are seating themselves in splendidly upholstered chairs on the balcony. The central figure is Anne of Austria, a handsome, stately woman still, though disease and cares have marked deep lines on her countenance. Beside her sits another good-looking woman, dressed in black, Queen Henrietta-Maria of England, daughter of Henry of Navarre, and widow of Charles I, who, if all accounts be true, was so scantily supplied with money by the miserly Mazarin, when she first sought shelter in France, that she could hardly get even a fire to warm her cold apartment in the Louvre. Beside her is a girl whose features give the promise of beauty to come. Her dark hair and eyes resemble her mother's,



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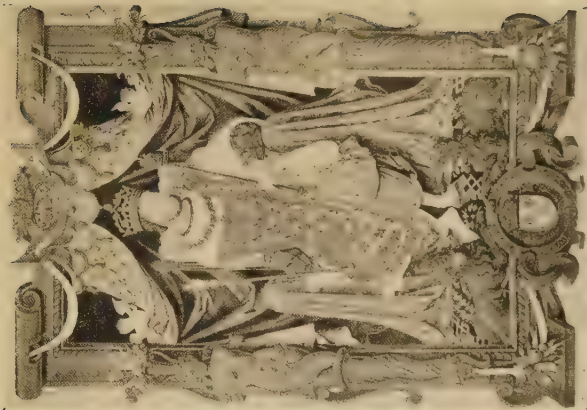
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though there is a dangerous flash in them at times, which she never inherited from the good-natured, indolent Henrietta-Maria. Behind the three ladies stands Turenne, a fine soldierly man, together with a group of other nobles. On the next balcony sits, or rather reclines, the emaciated figure of Mazarin, with his secretary, Colbert, a lean, sallow-faced young man, beside him. The Cardinal is very near his end now, but he keeps his bony fingers upon the reins of state till the last. Between the two balconies, anxious and somewhat fussy, hovers Catherine de Beauvais, the mistress of the house. Formerly Mdle. de Bellier, she had been first femme de chambre to Anne of Austria, and knew, it was said, many a court secret, which had reached no other ears outside the royal circle. At any rate, when she decided to marry Pierre de Beauvais, a rich manufacturer, Anne supplied the stone for their house in the Rue François Miron, and gave Pierre a title as well. She still visited her old friend, and it was from her house that she had elected to watch her son's entry into Paris with his bride on this 26th of August, 1660.

While we have been noting the aristocratic onlookers, shouts and cheers from the Rue Sainte Antoine announce the approach of the procession. In a gilded chariot, lined with rich crimson velvet, sits the new Queen, Maria Theresa of Austria, dressed in white satin



*[Jean Petisins.*  
LOUIS XIV.



*[Jean de Tillet.*  
FRANCIS I.



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adorned with pearls, with a mantle of purple velvet over her shoulders. Her pretty, timid face is pleasing to the crowd, and probably old Mazarin, up on his balcony, smiled with satisfaction as he read in her somewhat characterless features that here was a queen who would give no trouble to the Ministers. At her right hand rides Louis XIV, a splendid figure, clad in cloth of gold, trimmed with black lace, and collar and ruffles were of the finest white point. He is a good horseman, and has perfect control over the magnificent charger which starts and plunges as its master acknowledges the cheers of his people. At her left rides Philip of Orleans, the King's brother, beautifully dressed too, but too effeminate, too discontented and sullen, to be such a favourite with the populace. Behind follows another splendid coach, its panels painted by Lebrun, drawn by a wonderful team of mules. But the Musketeers, who ride beside it, escort an empty vehicle. It is Mazarin's. He cannot stand the jolting over the rough streets now, and his day for taking part in processions is over.

Such were the scenes that this rather dingy old house looked down upon in former days, but we must continue our walk now, only pausing to look at No. 82, once the home of President Hénault, the old friend of Madame du Deffand. The first turning to the right out of the Rue François Miron is the Rue des Barres.

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In the days of Charles VI a young noble lived here, Louis de Bourdon by name, a man who had distinguished himself at the Battle of Agincourt. Unluckily for him, he had become enamoured of Isabeau of Bavaria, the Queen of Charles VI, whose frequent attacks of insanity left her free to follow her own devices as a rule. One evening de Bourdon was riding from the Rue des Barres to Vincennes, where Isabeau was then residing, when he fell in with the king himself, and some of his nobles, just returning from there. He saluted hastily and passed at a gallop, hoping to escape unnoticed in the dusk, but Charles had recognised him. That same night the Provost of Paris arrived with his archers, arrested de Bourdon, and "put him to the question." Before morning a heavy sack was dropped into the Seine. If a fisherman had come across it he would have read, painted in black letters upon it, "*Laissez passer la justice du Roi,*" and would have drawn back with a shudder. De Bourdon would never visit Isabeau again.

Centuries later another curious scene took place here at night. In 1794 the Sectional Committee tribunal sat in the old Hôtel des Barres in this street. About 11 o'clock, in the evening of the 9th Thermidor, shouts were heard outside, and the frantic ringing of the tocsin rose above the cries of the mob. The door was flung open and the crowd burst in, carrying two objects in their midst. One was

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Lebas, killed by jumping from the windows of the Hôtel de Ville, and the other was Augustin Robespierre, with both thighs broken in the same attempt, but with sufficient life to take him to the guillotine next day. Robespierre senior had fallen, the Terror was over, and Paris could breathe freely once more.

The next turning to the right from the Rue François Miron is the Rue Geoffroy l'Asnier, No. 26 of which was once the Hôtel de Chalons-Luxembourg, built for the second Constable de Montmorency. We will go down the Rue de Jouy, the next turning, past No. 7, which, though now the Pharmacie Central, once housed the ducal family of d'Aumont. The Rue de Jouy leads into the Rue du Figuier, the first of a whole collection of streets, such as the Rues Fauconnier, des Jardins, St. Paul, des Lions, and Beautrellis, which are built upon the site of the old Hôtel de St. Paul. Charles V, known as "The Wise," was the first of the French kings to tire of the palace on the Ile de Cité, so he drained some of the land on the north side of the Seine, and there, about the year 1364, he built himself a dwelling replete with every luxury known to the age. The heavy beams that held up the low ceilings of the royal apartments were painted with golden fleur de lys. The windows were fitted with a brass lattice to keep out the pigeons, which had free access to the other rooms when the shutters were thrown back. The great



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banqueting hall had windows of stained glass depicting armorial bearings, and scenes from the lives of the saints. Fresh rushes were regularly strewn upon the floor, with sweet herbs to make a pleasant odour, and round the huge oak tables were placed stools, benches and forms, according to the rank of those who sat upon them, while at the head, under a canopy, was a great armchair for the King, upholstered in red leather and decorated with silken tassels.

In the gardens were all manner of fruit trees, vines, pears, apples and cherries. Paths edged with rosemary and lavender led to shady green bowers of trellis-work, and in the trees cooed the pigeons, large flocks of which were kept partly for ornament, and partly to vary the monotonous routine of coarser meats at the King's table. Life was simple in those days, even in royal palaces. Early to bed and early to rise was the rule. Two great meals per day, dinner at eleven and supper at seven, then, by nine in the winter and ten in the summer, all lights would be out, and not a sound would be heard but the stamping of a horse in the stables, the yelp of a dog, or the measured tramp of the sentinels. Such simplicity was not destined to last long, however. Charles VII abandoned the Hôtel St. Paul for the Tournelles; then, later on, Francis I, ever in need of ready money, had part of it sold, while the rest of it disappeared in the

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seventeenth century, when streets were made through the gardens and orchards, and only their names were left to perpetuate the memory of the old palace.

Many of these streets contain fine houses, and many well-known people have lived in them. One of the oldest of these houses is in the Rue du Figuier, at the corner where it joins the Rue de l'Hôtel de Ville. Formerly the town house of the Archbishop of Sens, it shares with the Cluny the distinction of being the only fifteenth century dwelling-house still existing in Paris. In 1605 the old Hôtel de Sens was fitted up for Marguerite de Valois, who was then permitted by Henry IV to reside in Paris again. By this time Marguerite was a woman of over fifty; her fiery passions had cooled somewhat, and she settled down as a patroness of art and literature. Twice a week she held open house for her protégés, with whom she talked on such easy terms that, as one of them said, "it was scarce credible that she had once been wife to the King." Always kind-hearted, always extravagant, always in debt, she gained and kept the friendship of Marie de Medicis, who now occupied Marguerite's place at the Louvre, a friendship to the honour of both parties, since Marie for her part came forward again and again to pay the former queen's debts. The Hôtel de Sens was not destined to be the home of the last of the Valois line for long. A year after

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her arrival, a favourite page was murdered before her eyes by a discarded lover, and the tragedy gave her such a distaste for the place that she moved to a house in the Pré-aux-Clercs, on the other side of the Seine, where she remained till her death in 1615.

A little further on is the Rue des Jardins. When it was still a country lane with orchards around it, Rabelais settled here in a cottage, and here he died in 1553. About a century later Molière lived here for a while when acting in a theatre on the Quai des Celestins. Next to the Rue des Jardins is the Rue St. Paul, out of which two streets open. The one nearest the river is the Rue des Lions, connected in name, though in nothing else, with a very well-known incident. Here it was that Francis I kept his lions, for "King Francis was a royal king and loved a royal sport." Here it was that the lady, whose name has not come down to us, throwing her glove down into the arena where the lions were fighting, requested her cavalier, de Lorges, to retrieve it for her. The story is too familiar to need repetition, but it is sufficiently dramatic to have inspired two poets, first Leigh Hunt, and then Browning, to tell the tale, the one from the knight's and the other from the lady's point of view.

The second street, the Rue Charles V, brings us to an entirely different drama. At No. 12 we see where the notorious Madame de Brin-

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villiers lived. Her story is so extraordinary that it is worth going into in some detail. Her father, M. d'Aubray, the Civil Lieutenant of the Châtelet Prison, married her in 1651 to the wealthy Marquis de Brinvilliers. He was by no means a model husband, but his doings paled into insignificance beside hers. Her principal lover was one Gaudin de Sainte-Croix, with whom her behaviour was such as to outrage even the easy rules of morality of that day. At last the scandal became so public that M. d'Aubray had Sainte-Croix dragged out of his daughter's carriage as they were driving together, and imprisoned in the Bastille. Unluckily for a good many people, he shared a cell with an Italian, known as Exili, a past master in the art of poisoning, who declared that in Rome alone he had got rid of no fewer than a hundred and fifty people whose presence was inconvenient to their friends. This Exili, being bored with prison life, whiled away the time by teaching his trade to Sainte-Croix, who was such an apt pupil that, on his release, he took rooms in the Impasse Maubert, as we saw in an earlier chapter, and there fitted up a laboratory for his experiments. The Marquise visited him constantly, and learnt the art in her turn. Outwardly she became a changed woman. She became intensely interested in charity hospitals, and even worked in them as a nurse herself, giving medicine to patients, watching the progress of disease with

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the keenest interest and sympathy. The majority of her patients died, but that was by no means unusual in seventeenth century hospitals, and the devoted Marquise would watch by their beds till the last.

Then her father fell ill. She atoned for all her past misdemeanours by giving herself up to nursing him, but his disease, some obscure and unaccountable malady, grew upon him, and he died in agony. She had a large number of relatives who had shown themselves rather too much interested in her affairs formerly. It was curious how many of them were taken ill in the course of the next few years. The Marquise with the round, almost childish face, and innocent blue eyes, nursed them tenderly one after the other, and lamented their deaths with the deepest sorrow. Her husband fell ill, but though at death's door, he recovered, owing apparently to Sainte-Croix having weakened the poison in the fear that he would have to marry the widow if she were allowed to become one. Then, in 1672, an accident happened. Sainte-Croix, with a glass mask over his face, was shut up in his laboratory as usual when, in some way, he broke the mask; the fumes of his own decoctions poisoned him, and he was found dead on the floor next day. The police searched his rooms, and discovered not only various mysterious poisons, but a casket containing some ardent love letters addressed to him by the Marquise



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de Brinvilliers and details of her experiments, giving the exact doses of the poisons and the periods at which they should be administered. She, having received word of Sainte-Croix's death, knew that these fatal documents would be discovered, set off hastily for England. At that time Colbert's brother was Ambassador at the Court of St. James, and plans were laid to kidnap the Marquise on her arrival. She got wind of this scheme, however, and fled to Liège instead, where she sought and found shelter in a convent. Here she remained for some time, until her fears were quieted sufficiently to allow her to begin an ardent love affair with a handsome young abbé, who visited the convent frequently. At last he begged her to allow him to take her to a more convenient place for a pair of lovers. She consented, slipped out of her window one night, got over the convent wall by the aid of a rope ladder, and climbed gaily into the abbé's carriage, surrounded by his own servants, which she found awaiting her. Off they started on a journey that did not end until the Marquise was taken back over the frontier to Paris, and safely deposited in the Bastille. The handsome abbé was a clever agent of the police, and the fair prisoner had met her match at last! Threats of torture induced her to confirm all, and on July 16th, 1676, she was taken, as the Marquise de Sévigné writes, first to make amende honorable before the



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door of Nôtre Dame, then to the Place de Grève to be beheaded. Finally her ashes were flung to the four winds, and that was the end of this extraordinary case.

The Rue Charles V takes us into the Rue de la Cérisaie, where, on the site of the present No. 10, once stood the Marshal de Villeroy's house, in which he entertained Peter the Great in 1717. From thence we make our way to the modern Boulevard Henry IV, which takes us to the Place de la Bastille.

So much has already been written about the Bastille, its horrors and its prisoners; its mystery of the man in the Iron Mask, and its fall in the first days of the Revolution, that we will content ourselves by saying that it was the last bit of Paris to remain in English hands. It was in the year 1446 that the remnants of the English army fortified themselves in the towers of the Bastille as a last hope. The game was lost by this time; the Duc de Richemont, Constable of France, was in possession of the city; no help was forthcoming from outside, so they capitulated on being offered honourable terms, and departed, with their arms and baggage, never to return until the allied army entered Paris upon the fall of Napoleon.

## CHAPTER XI

### BEYOND THE BASTILLE

GOING eastwards from the Bastille, we enter the Rue du Faubourg St. Antoine, where the great barricade was erected in the Revolution of 1848. Street fighting was at its fiercest here, so much so that it took General Cavaignac and his troops three days to storm it. Sir Archibald Alison gives a vivid account of the "sublime instance of christian heroism and devotion" which has made the Rue du Fabuourg St. Antoine famous. "Monseigneur Affre," he writes, "Archbishop of Paris, horror-stricken with the slaughter which had been going on for three days, resolved to attempt a reconciliation between the opposing parties, or perish in the attempt. Having obtained leave from General Cavaignac to repair to the headquarters of the insurgents, he set out, dressed in his pontifical robes, having the cross in his hand, attended by his two chaplains, also in full canonicals, and three intrepid members of the Assembly. Deeply affected by this courageous act, which they knew was almost certain death, the people, as he walked, through the streets, fell on their knees and besought him to desist; but he persisted

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saying, 'It is my duty; a good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.' At seven in the evening he arrived at the Place de la Bastille, where the fire of musketry was extremely warm on both sides. It ceased at the august spectacle, and the archbishop, bearing the cross aloft, advanced with his two priests to the foot of the barricade. A single attendant, bearing a green branch, preceded the prelate. The soldiers, seeing him advance so close to those who had already slain bearers of flags of truce, approached in order to give him succour in case of need; the insurgents, on their side, descended the barricade, and the redoubtable combatants stood close to each other, exchanging looks of defiance. Suddenly a shot was heard. Instantly the cry arose of 'Treason! Treason!' and the combatants, retreating on either side, began to exchange shots with as much fury as ever. Undismayed by the storm of balls which incessantly flew over his head from all quarters, the prelate advanced slowly, attended by his chaplains, to the summit of the barricade. One of them had his hat pierced by three balls, but the archbishop himself, almost by a miracle, escaped while on the top. He had descended three steps on the other side, when he was pierced through the loins by a shot from a window. The insurgents, horror-struck, approached him where he fell, staunching the wound, which was seen at once to be mortal, and carried him to a neighbouring hospital.

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When told that he had only a few minutes to live, 'God be praised!' he said, 'and may He accept my life as an expiation for my omissions during my episcopacy, and as an offering for the salvation of this misguided people.' With these words he expired." Such was the horror inspired among the rebels by this tragedy that they offered to surrender at once to Cavaignac on condition of a general pardon. He replied that the surrender must be unconditional. In consequence, fighting went on throughout the night, but at daybreak they capitulated, and the Revolution of '48 was over.

In the years preceding the fall of the Bastille, if anyone had had sufficient curiosity to enquire who lived in the Rue du Faubourg St. Antoine, he would undoubtedly have been given the name of Santerre, the brewer, as the best known man in the district. A fine, handsome good-natured fellow, in the prime of life, possessor of a brewery that made the best ale in France, a good horseman, owner of magnificent dray-horses, and an ample, increasing income, Santerre was a happy man if ever there was one. Could he only have kept clear of politics, the chances are that he would have died as he had lived, proprietor of the Hortensia brewery, now No. 9 Rue du Reuilly, and of the comfortable house, now pulled down, in the Rue du Faubourg St. Antoine near at hand. But vanity was Santerre's undoing. When the Bastille was taken, his great dray-

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horses drew the straw which set fire to the draw-bridges, and it was to the Hortensia that the triumphant crowd brought two released prisoners (one a lunatic and the other a man of such hopelessly immoral character that he had been kept in the Bastille at the special request of his family), together with the keys of the fortress. Ale flowed freely to all; Santerre became the most popular man of the day, and was created captain of the guard of the district. In the hard winter of 1792, he turned his brewery into a soup kitchen, and his huge vats became stew pots which transformed whole flocks of sheep and tons of rice into free food for the hungry. The brewer was a national hero now. He was unanimously elected General of the National Parisian Guard, and his cup of satisfaction was filled to overflowing. Clad in a gorgeous uniform, sitting superbly on a splendid charger, he was only less fine than he imagined himself to be. Having transmitted General Berruyer's order for the beating of drums to drown the King's voice, when he attempted to harangue his people from the scaffold, Santerre was short-sighted enough to claim the glory and responsibility of the order himself. That was the first step in his undoing.

When the Chouans rose in the western provinces, Santerre's generalship was put to the test. Alas! he found to his cost that a fine uniform, a showy horse, and a handsome

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face did not make a military genius. The Chouans saw a good deal of his back and nothing of his face. The Convention had a short way with discredited generals, and the brewer found himself ere long a prisoner in the Convent des Carmes. On the 10th of Thermidor he was set free. Back he went to St. Antoine and the Hortensia, but changes had taken place since 1792. The vats were empty, his house was pillaged, his business was ruined, and his wife had departed, taking any articles of value she could lay hands on. Instead of being hailed as "glorious Santerre, the father of the Faubourg," he was now "infamous Santerre who brutally silenced the King." The people of the quarter, who had so often revelled in his beer, passed him unnoticed or turned to jeer at him. From that day onwards nothing succeeded with him. He would beg ministers for a post, only to be snubbed. He would petition Buona-  
parte for a division, or even a regiment, only to be laughed at. In 1808 he plagued the Minister of War until that worthy, tired of his importunities, granted him an interview. Once more the splendid uniform was taken out of its box, the gilded sword was girded on, and the great plumed hat was brushed up for the occasion. It was a cold day in February, and the streets were heavy with melting snow. The cab he was in could hardly get along, and the general, fearful of missing his interview,



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continued his journey on foot. Exhausted with fatigue and excitement, he struggled to the Hôtel d'Havré in the Rue de Lille, then used as the Ministry of War. Just as he reached the entrance he stumbled, fell full length in the slush, and lay motionless. A sentry picked him up. The blue coat and white breeches were ruined for ever, and the plumed hat would never be worn again. Santerre had had a stroke. For another year he lived on, helpless and imbecile; then he who had made so much noise in his time, passed quietly away, unmourned and uncared for.

Still following the Rue du Faubourg St. Antoine, we come at last to the Place de la Nation. Here it was that Rousseau and Grimm passed, one summer's day in the middle of the eighteenth century, on their way to Vincennes to visit Diderot the impetuous, who was then in enforced retirement within the fortress. By the side of the Place du Trône, as it was then called, stood a pretty old farmhouse, where cows grazed peacefully in the meadows, and the reapers worked in the corn. Jean Jacques, the sentimentalist, insisted upon pausing here to drink a glass of milk under the trees, discoursing meantime upon the beauties of nature and the joys of the simple life.

That was about the middle of the century. Towards the end of it, this same Place du Trône witnessed the terrific downward rush of the stone which Jean Jacques and his friends

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had helped to roll gently along the gradual slope which led to the precipice. The inhabitants of the Rue St. Honoré, tired of the tumbrils, tired of the sight of death, tired of the Revolution itself in fact, had petitioned that the guillotine might be taken away from the Place de la Concorde, and set up elsewhere. It was done; the Place du Trône was chosen, and in the last six weeks of the Terror, when its frenzy had passed beyond all bounds, 1,300 heads fell, where Rousseau had sipped his glass of milk. Three generations perished here one day, the old Duchesse de Noailles, the Duchesse d'Ayen, and the Vicomtesse de Noailles, grandmother, mother, and sister of Lafayette's wife: the old Maréchal and Maréchale de Mouchy, whom we saw leaving the Luxembourg, made part of another "Fournée"; André Chénier, Baron de Trenck, the Abbess de Montmorency, the eighty year old Abbé de Fénélon, nephew of the great Fénélon, beloved of all the poor of Paris; the Duchesse de Biron, who begged for cotton wool to put into her nostril, lest the smell of the crowd and the blood should make her turn faint and seem afraid. All these and many hundreds of lesser degree perished on the Place du Trône.

When the day's work was done, the executioner's assistants flung bodies and heads pell mell into carts which were taken off, under cover of darkness, no one knew where. It was reserved for a girl of the people, a seam-

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stress, who had lost both father and mother in one day, to find out. She it was who followed the carts with their revolting load. Down the Rue du Picpus they went till they came to a waste region, once the garden of the ruined Augustinian Convent of Le Petit Picpus. Huge pits had been dug here; the carts were backed to the edge and tilted up; a load of quicklime was thrown over the bodies and the burial was over. The seamstress kept her secret till the Terror was ended; then she revealed it to Madame Lafayette, who, with the help of other relatives of the victims, bought the convent ruins and the garden. The chapel was restored and handed over to the nuns of the Perpetual Adoration, who prayed daily for the souls of those 1,300 victims who died on the Place du Trône.

While in the eastern quarter of Paris it is worth while to go northwards a little way to visit the great cemetery of Père Lachaise. Leaving the Place de la Nation by the Avenue Philippe Auguste, we cross the Rue de Charonne where one of the strangest prisons of the Revolution was established. It had long been a custom in Paris to use a "Maison de Santé," or private lunatic asylum, for various purposes other than the safe-keeping of lunatics. A wild young man, who had got into trouble with the authorities, might well spend some time in custody there, a tiresome eccentric, not bad enough to be called a lunatic, could be kept

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there out of harm's way in great comfort, or an inconvenient relative could disappear there for years, for ever, perhaps. Of these Maisons de Santé's none was more comfortable than Dr. Belhomme's at the end of the Rue de Charonne. By the end of 1792, however, there was a noticeable scarcity of rich eccentrics and inconvenient relatives. Then it was that the worthy doctor conceived the brilliant idea of turning his house into a prison for the rich. He broached the idea to the Revolutionary Committee, and his offer was accepted. The Maison de Belhomme became a paradise in the midst of hell, an oasis in a desert of death. The inmates were few, but they laughed, they sang, they danced, they received visitors, they walked in the garden, and Fouquier-Tinville's agents never visited them. Small wonder that none of them ever attempted escape, in spite of the laxness of the guard. How was such a delightful state of affairs brought about, and how did Dr. Belhomme become such a benefactor to mankind? One word answers both questions. Gold! The doctor wanted gold, the members of the Revolutionary Committees wanted gold. A rich aristocrat was sent to Belhomme, who let him have an unfurnished garret for, say, twenty livres. Then the cost of living was at least ten times as high as anywhere else. Everything from a stick of firewood to a cabbage leaf was priced. Terms were settled, Belhomme pocketed about half the profits, and the Revo-

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lutionary Committee the other half. The prisoner had bought his life for one month. Then came another settling up. Prices would be doubled, perhaps. If the prisoner protested he was courteously informed he could go elsewhere; to the St. Lazare, for instance, or to the Luxembourg, which led straight to the Conciergerie and the guillotine. He preferred Dr. Belhomme and paid for another month's life. So long as money lasted he was safe. As soon as his purse emptied he must go and make room for another wealthy prisoner. The prison was a most profitable speculation for all parties, but nothing was stable in 1794. Belhomme was denounced to the Tribunal himself, and though he had sufficient influence left to avoid the guillotine, he was sent to a rival maison de santé, near Picpus, where, no doubt, he enjoyed exploitation in his turn. After the 10th of Thermidor he was tried for extortion and sentenced to six years in irons. At the end of four he was released, and there his history ends. It may be that he returned to lunatics at the Rue de Charonne, or maybe he died in poverty. At any rate, his house remained for many a long year, with an inscription over its high doorway, "Maison de Santé du Docteur Belhomme," as a reminiscence of this curious episode of the Revolution.

Continuing our walk northwards, we come to Père Lachaise, that great city of the dead erected on the site of a fine country house



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belonging to Father Lachaise, Louis XIV's confessor, he who performed the marriage service for the King and Madame de Maintenon. Here, whichever way one turns, one sees monuments to the men and women whose names are known throughout, not only France, but the whole world. The remains of those unhappy lovers, Abelard and Heloise, brought here soon after the cemetery was made, lie under a Gothic canopy. The name of Felix Faure, the President; Rachel, the tragedian; Rosa Bonheur, the painter; Chopin, Corot, La Fontaine and Molière (also removed from elsewhere); Alphonse Daudet, General Foy, who befriended Dumas; Marshal Ney, Beaumarchais, Oscar Wilde, the Duc de Morny, Maquet, who collaborated with Dumas; Michelet, the historian; Barras, the member of the Directory; Champollion, the orientalist; Marie-Joseph Chénier, the brother of André; Madame de Genlis, Marshal Mortier, who was killed by Fieschi's infernal machine; President Thiers, Grouchy, who was too late at the Battle of Waterloo, and many another notability strikes the eye in the course of a walk through this huge cemetery. The view of Paris from here is superb on a clear day. Balzac, who lies here himself, realised that when he made Eugène Rastignac climb to the heights on the evening of old Goriot's funeral, and gaze over the city, with its sparkling lights as he utters his braggart challenge to it, "War! War between us, henceforth!"



## CHAPTER XII

### THE RUE ST. ANTOINE TO THE BOULEVARD DU TEMPLE

STARTING once more from the Hôtel de Ville, and entering the Rue St. Antoine, we find ourselves on the southern edge of that most fascinating district, the Marais, where nearly every street has had its share in the making of history, and nearly every street can show the remains of some fine old hôtel, a turret, a fountain, or an entrance, strangely at variance with the offices, squalid lodgings, and dingy shops with which it is surrounded. Two difficulties attend the writer who would deal shortly with this part of Paris. First of all, the plenitude of material is so great that even a brief notice of all the interesting items would swell the book beyond the desired limits, on which account only the most important, or the most dramatic can be dealt with; and secondly, that these old streets, here, and in every part of Paris, are so constantly changing. A great scheme for the "improvement" of this quarter was hindered by the War, for which the lover of old Paris may be devoutly thankful, but there is always a chance that the particular building one is looking for may have disappeared, or been

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transformed into a brand new, most sanitary, and most hideous pile of tenements. Great pains have been taken over the accuracy of this book, but there is always a chance of disappointment for the reader, so with this warning we will proceed on our way along the Rue St. Antoine.

As regards the street itself, it is one of the oldest in Paris, having been the main entrance to the city from the east along which many a goodly procession, like that in honour of Louis XIV and his bride, has made its way to Nôtre Dame or the Louvre.

A narrow lane on the right, the Impasse Charlemagne, leads to an old courtyard in which may be seen a tower with a spiral stair. This is all that remains of the ancient Hôtel du Prévôt, a building contemporary with the Hôtel de St. Paul. Aubriot, the Provost of Paris, was the owner, a fine type of rich bourgeois, and a personal friend of Charles V, who more than once justified his title of "The Wise" by deferring to the Provost's judgment in matters connected with the townsfolk. Aubriot's great work was the building of the Bastille. Once more the irony of fate comes in, for no sooner was Charles V in his grave than the Provost was thrown into one of his own dungeons, condemned on a charge of heresy to languish there "on the bread of affliction and the water of sadness," as the sentence picturesquely puts it. He did not stay

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there long, however, for the mob, who loved him dearly, rose up in anger, and fairly forced the authorities to give their Provost back to them.

A few steps further along the Rue St. Antoine bring us to the church of St. Paul and St. Louis, also on the right hand side of the street. We have skipped over the best part of six centuries since we looked at the old tower in the Impasse Charlemagne, and we are now in search of two shells for holding holy water, one on each side of the doorway. The interest attaching to them is melancholy. They were given by Victor Hugo in commemoration of his daughter Leopoldine's first Communion and marriage, both of which took place in this church. The marriage was in February, 1842. The following August she and her husband, Charles Vacquerie, were drowned in a boating accident.

On the left side, No. 62, the Hôtel de Sully, the house built by Henry IV's great minister, still stands much as it did in his day. It was to visit Sully that Henry was going on that day when Ravallac stabbed him in the Rue de Feronnerie. Curiously enough it was occupied in the eighteenth century by another financial genius, Turgot, the one man who might possibly have averted the Revolution had he been given a chance of carrying out his reforms, and had he been able to conciliate Marie Antoinette, who could not understand his vehement protests against court extravagance.

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Before turning up the Rue Birague into the Place des Vosges, we must go a little further along the Rue St. Antoine to a spot which might be called sacred to Dumas. On the right side of the street stands what is now the Calvinist church, the Temple St. Marie, and nearly opposite to it, the Rue des Tournelles enters the Rue St. Antoine. In the days of Charles IX this street was simply an open space between the boundary wall of the old Palace of the Tournelles and the Bastille. Here it was that the great duel was fought at five o'clock on the morning of April 27th, 1578, between the mignons of the King and those of the Duke of Anjou. Quélus, Maugiron and Livarot fought for the former, while d'Entragues, Riberac and Schomberg upheld the Duke. Maugiron and Schomberg both lads of eighteen, were killed on the spot. Riberac died next day. Quélus, after languishing thirty-three days in the Hôtel de Cossé near by, succumbed to his nineteen wounds. Livarot had a wound in the head which laid him low for many a week, and only d'Entragues out of the whole party was lucky enough to escape with slight wounds. But, as we said before, this ground is Dumas', and so long as the story lives in "Chicot the Jester," it is needless for lesser pens to attempt a description of the combat. The Calvinist church was formerly the chapel belonging to the Filles de la Visitation, and this chapel was built

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upon the site of the Hôtel de Cossé, where Charles IX visited Quélus daily as he lay slowly dying of his wounds.

Years afterwards Mdlle. Louise de Lafayette sought shelter here, and took the veil to escape the love she had aroused in the chilly heart of Louis XIII. He still continued to visit her here until Vincent de Paul, his confessor, sternly rebuked him for the scandal he was causing by his constant appearance at the convent door, and forced him to leave her in peace. Now let us retrace our steps a little way, and, turning up the Rue Birague, enter that most charming spot of the whole Marais, the Place des Vosges.

In the days when Paris settled down sullenly under English rule, the Duke of Bedford, Regent for Henry VI, built himself a pleasant dwelling close to the Bastille, and named it the Hôtel des Tournelles. In due course, Charles VII regained Paris, though with little effort on his part, and gave the Tournelles to the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XI, who, on coming to the throne himself, made it his favourite residence, and there the Kings of France continued to live until Catherine de Medicis' day. Here it was that the good-natured, easy-going old Louis XII brought his flighty young bride, Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII. The old King's habits were of the simplest. Up early in the morning, sitting down to dinner at nine, supping at four, he



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liked to go to bed about six o'clock. But this arrangement did not at all suit his new queen, fresh from all the gaieties of her brother's court. She explained that no one except merchants and shopkeepers dined before mid-day now, that it was necessary to have an elaborate supper late in the evening, to dance and make merry afterwards, while no one thought of bed before midnight. Her infatuated old husband gave way to her in everything. His way of living was completely altered, he ate and drank heavily, he danced at night, and in a few weeks he died in the Tournelles, worn out with a surfeit of gaiety.

From the day of Louis XII we pass on to those of Henry II. His favourite amusement was the tournament, and many a lance was broken by him in honour of Diane de Poitiers, while the neglected Catherine de Medicis looked on with wrath and bitterness in her heart. Then came that fatal day in 1565, when Henry insisted upon running yet another course with Montgomery, the Captain of the Scottish Guard. By some accident a splinter of the captain's broken lance, passing between the bars of the King's helmet, penetrated his brain. For fifteen days he lay unconscious in the royal apartments of the Tournelles, but he was never to carry Diane's colours into the tiltyard again. He died, and Catherine's chance had come at last. One of her first acts was to demolish the Tournelles, ostensibly from grief



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at her husband's death, but more likely, perhaps, because she had no wish to live again in the palace which had seen Diane's triumph over her.

For many years the site was waste ground, then Henry IV, the truest lover of Paris among all her kings, erected the splendid square we see to-day. As soon as the houses were finished, the fashionable Parisians flocked to fill them. When we reconstruct old Paris in our minds' eye, it is generally a case of sweeping away practically all that we see to-day, but when we come to the Place des Vosges, it is merely the human interest that has changed. Could the old residents return, they would have not the slightest difficulty in recognising their former dwellings. No. 1 was the Hôtel de Coulanges, in a pavilion adjoining which Madame de Sévigné was born. No. 3 was the Hôtel of the d'Estrades family; every house, in fact, is connected with some name known to history. The haughty de Rohans had a house here; that beautiful intrigueante, the Duchesse de Chevreuse, lived here at one time; so did the Maréchal de Lavardin, and the Chaulnes family, both of them names familiar to readers of Madame de Sévigné's letters. Dangeau, the court busybody in the days of Louis XIV, bound to be in the fashion, had a town house in the Place. The great Richelieu himself lived at No. 21, while his mistress, Marion Delorme, had an apartment near at hand.

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The mere reiteration of their names is sufficient to conjure up a dozen different scenes. Under the shady arcades some of the greatest men in France have walked up and down on a summer's evening. Sully, of the strong sensible face and long beard, watched these buildings as they rose, and doled out, with a sparing hand, the money with which the workmen were paid. The Duc de la Rochefoucauld, crippled with gout as he was, has hobbled along to repeat his latest pungent "Maxim" at the Duc de Fronsac's house. Madame de Sévigné has come from the Carnavalet to sup with her friends, the de Lavardins, to laugh over the latest gossip, and to read them one of Madame de Grignan's epistles. Corneille and Molière have been seen here, Turenne has ridden up to the de Rohan mansion, Richelieu has solved great problems of state while talking amiably, perhaps, to his beautiful neighbour and bitter enemy, the Duchesse de Chevreuse. Out in the square the younger men played "running the ring," quarrelled, arranged duels in despite of Richelieu's edicts, or glanced up at the windows to see if a flutter of the curtains or a glimpse of a satin dress betrayed the presence of some inamorata looking down upon them. Time passed on, and ways changed. In 1833 Victor Hugo settled in No. 6, once the Hôtel de Guémenée, where Marion Delorme had peeped down, shaking with laughter, upon her own

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funeral, specially arranged for the purpose of deceiving her creditors, and Madame de Sévigné had read her letters to the de Lavardins. Théophile Gautier had rooms at No. 8, while Rachel, the emotional, intense tragedienne, lived at No. 13. Hugo's house is now a museum, and well worth visiting, but we have lingered over long in the Place des Vosges, though if the reader has any love for the picturesque side of history, he will pardon the digression when he sees those arcaded houses, with the high sloping roofs, surrounding the green square.

The most fascinating route through the Marais would take us along the Rue des Francs Bourgeois, and past the Musée Carnavalet, but because there is so much to see and think about, we will leave the Place des Vosges by the opposite side, the north-east corner, and enter the Rue des Tournelles instead. No. 28 Rue des Tournelles was the house which François Mansard, the architect, designed for himself. On his death it went to his nephew, Jules Hardouin Mansard, also a well-known architect, and he let the first floor to a tenant, Ninon de l'Enclos.

Born in 1616, having all through her life an unrivalled string of lovers, Ninon remained fascinating to the last, and commanded a certain respect as well. Even the prudish Madame de Maintenon, remembering certain kindnesses received in early days from the old



THE BASTILLE, THE TEMPLE AND MONTFAUCON,  
ABOUT 1440  
[Jean Fouquet.]



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courtesan, suggested that she should lead a quiet, retired life in an apartment at Versailles, but Ninon loved the world and her freedom far too well to exchange her rooms in Mansard's house for the gloomy splendour of Versailles under Madame de Maintenon. Here she entertained, evening after evening, from five till nine, fascinating all who saw her. "God, make me an honest man," she said, "but never an honest woman." She loved life, and the hypocritical religious gloom that overhung the court in her later years filled her with aversion. At eighty-four, "*devorée du temps*," and reduced to nothing more than "*quelques os entrelacés*," as Châteaubriand says, she was forced to bow to her advancing years to the extent of giving up her evening entertaining, but up to the last she continued to receive her friends. It was in 1605 that the lad Arouet, to be known ere long as Voltaire, was presented to her. He impressed her favourably, too, for when she terminated her varied career at the age of ninety, she left him two thousand francs to buy books with.

We turn to the left up the Rue Gilles, which takes us to the Rue Turenne, and here, at No. 58, at the corner of the Rue Villehardouin, stood the house of the crippled poet, Scarron. His reputation was none of the best. As a young man, so the story went, he had engaged in a certain indecent frolic, was surprised in the course of it, and had to fly for his life. He



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saved himself by taking refuge in the river, under the parapet of a bridge. He had to spend several hours up to the neck in icy cold water, before the hue and cry died away, and the result of this immersion was acute rheumatism that tied him to a wheeled chair for evermore. Racked with pain, but loving society as much as ever, he speedily realised that he could only attract society by amusing it. His mordant jests, stinging epigrams, and witty rejoinders made him famous. All the celebrated men of the day, and some of the women, appeared in his house evening after evening to regale themselves with conversation, for solid material, meat and wine, were somewhat scanty. One evening a young girl, good-looking and clever, but so hopelessly poor that a convent was her only future, was brought by an aunt to one of Scarron's assemblies. The cripple was a kindly man, and he took a great fancy to this unfortunate Françoise d'Aubigny. He suggested marriage to her. She accepted more or less joyfully, for though she had no particular affection for Scarron, she was ambitious, and had no desire for a convent life. For several years she kept his house for him, met his friends, including Ninon, then at the height of her fascination, and Mdlle. de Scudéry, the literary lady, until her husband, laughing at his own sufferings to the end, passed out of the world with a muttered "At last I shall be well," leaving his wife nearly as poor as he

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found her. We shall meet Madame Scarron, the future Madame de Maintenon, again before long, but meantime we will continue our walk up the Rue de Turenne till we come to the Rue St. Claude, just beyond the church of St. Denis du Sacrament.

A passer-by in the year 1781 might have noticed a strange and imposing figure issuing from the courtyard of No. 1 Rue St. Claude; an awkwardly made man, whose powdered hair drooped in absurd curls round his face, wearing an elaborate blue suit, white silk stockings with gold clocks, velvet shoes, the buckles of which sparkled with gems, and a blue fox-skin cloak over his shoulders. A closer look would have shown too great a profusion of diamonds on his fingers and in his shirt frill, to be in good taste. It was Cagliostro, the magician, who had just settled in the Rue St. Claude. Rumours were rife as to what went on inside the house; mysterious glimmers were noticed through chinks in the shutters; there were stories of liquid gold made in crucibles; he was even said to have discovered the philosopher's stone.

The grand almoner, Cardinal de Rohan, was seen to enter the house constantly. Madame de la Motte, who was soon to achieve notoriety in the Diamond Necklace case, was another frequent visitor. Cagliostro's wife, it was said, was as beautiful as the day, and as deeply versed as her husband in magic and

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alchemy. All Paris was agog to visit the Rue St. Claude. Séances were held, the future was revealed, and the dead were evoked to join a supper party. Voltaire, Diderot, d'Alembert, the Abbé de Voisenon, Montesquieu, and the Duc de Choiseul, all appeared. Their conversation, when they did come, was futile, but not more so than many of the results arrived at during séances to-day, and there is no doubt that Cagliostro was a man of considerable occult power. Marie Antoinette disapproved of him, Louis shrugged his heavy shoulders whenever the magician's name was mentioned, but crowds flocked to the Rue St. Claude, and money must have poured into Cagliostro's pockets nearly as steadily as if he really could produce it in his crucibles.

Then the affair of the Diamond Necklace came upon the Cardinal and the charlatan like a thunderbolt. Cagliostro was arrested, together with his friend, Madame de la Motte, and it took him ten months to get out of the Bastille again. On the day of his release a huge crowd escorted him home to the Rue St. Claude in triumph. Then another thunderbolt fell in the shape of an order from the King to leave Paris within twenty-four hours. All his furniture was left behind, the door was locked, and the Rue St. Claude saw the fox-skin no more. Eighteen years later, in 1805, the owner, who had escaped the guillotine, sold all the contents of the house as

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an indemnity for unpaid rent. Furniture, retorts, alembics, crucibles, and all the apparatus of Cagliostro's laboratory, were turned out to be dispersed to the winds by an auction.

One more incident closes the history of the house. In 1855 the old entrance doors were changed for another pair. These were not new either, but they were heavy and massive enough to serve for many a day. They were the gates of the old Temple, and by one of those curious coincidences of history, the doors of Cagliostro's courtyard are the very doors which shut behind Louis XVI as he entered the Temple, a prisoner, in 1792.

Turning back to the Rue Turenne, we follow it as far as the Rue des Filles du Calvaire, named after a celebrated convent which once stood here, by which we enter the wide and populous Boulevard du Temple leading to the Place de la République. Modern and uninteresting though it is, it has had time to be the scene of one historical event.

On a day in July, 1835, an Italian came to No. 50 in this street to bargain with the concierge for one of the front rooms, overlooking the Boulevard, which was to be let. He got the room, gave his name as Fieschi, and took up his abode at once. Friends visited him frequently, and often brought heavy, unwieldy parcels with them, but the Italian's affairs were of no consequence to anyone, and only served,

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perhaps, as a subject for gossip to the concierge and her friends.

On July 28th there was a considerable stir on the Boulevard. Louis Philippe was going to hold a grand review, and would pass that way as he rode out from the Tuileries. Though he was by no means popular, the sight would be a fine one, and a big crowd was assembling to see the procession pass. Up in his room on the third floor, Fieschi was busy with a curious machine, like a collection of tubes mounted on a stand. He had drawn it up close to the window, and was working his tubes up or down, to right or left, until they pointed at a certain spot in the street. Then, fixing a rope to a strong iron hook in the wall, his work seemed finished, and he sat down to await the approaching procession. First came Louis Philippe and his three elder sons, then Marshalls Mortier and Lubau with their staff, followed by the ministers, the household and the guard. They evoked no enthusiasm, and the cheering was but faint. Then, just as the King reached No. 50, an explosion like a volley of musketry, was heard. Horses reared, men were seen to fall, screams rose from the crowd, the guard and the police rushed up. No one knew what had happened, or what would happen, and all was confusion. Up in the third floor room Fieschi was lying prostrate on the floor, half suffocated by smoke. He had fired his infernal machine of four and twenty gun barrels, but



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some had failed to go off, and one had burst, wounding him in the face. Struggling to his feet, he groped for the rope he had left in readiness, and with a glance at the turmoil below, in the midst of which Marshal Mortier lay dead, together with several officers and a number of spectators, he swung himself over the window ledge and down on to a projecting roof below. In his descent he knocked over a flower pot, and that was his undoing. The police and the National Guard were on his track in a moment. His escape was cut off, and he was captured. The "Fieschi" attempt had failed. The King was unhurt, his sons were only slightly cut, and the attempt at assassination had done for Louis Philippe what he could never have done by his own efforts. It turned him, for the moment, into a popular hero again, for the crowd, which had received him so coldly, now burst into thunderous, enthusiastic cheers.



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PLACE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE TO THE RUE DE RIVOLI

THE end of the last chapter found us in the modern Boulevard du Temple, to the north of the Marais. Now we will take the busy Place de la République, which opens out of the Boulevard, for our next starting point, and go southwards once more through a different part of the Marais. First of all we must go a few steps down the quite uninteresting Rue de Turbigo, until we enter the Rue du Temple, which carries us straight back into the fascination of historical associations. Madame du Barry once lived at No. 193 of this street, and the church, near her house, was built by Marie de Medicis, and dedicated to Elizabeth of Hungary. Further down the street opens out upon the Square du Temple on the left side, the site of the old Temple, to which the royal family were taken after the 10th of August, 1792, when the Tuileries were sacked by the mob. Confined in the rooms of the Temple tower, it was here that the mob came surging from the prison of La Force, bearing the Princesse de Lamballe's head on a pike to show to her friend, Marie Antoinette. Here

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Louis XVI taught the Dauphin geography, while the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, and Madame Royale busied themselves with their needlework; here took place the parting with the King the night before his execution, here the Dauphin disappeared (whether he died or whether he was taken away elsewhere will never be known for certain, and the reader who wishes to form his own opinion on the subject had better consult M. Lenôtre's book, which contains all available evidence); here Madame Royale, an orphan, neglected by all, lingered on in loneliness for many months until she was permitted at last to leave France, and exchange her prison for a sojourn almost as dreary, at the Austrian court. In a letter to her uncle, afterwards Louis XVIII, written soon after her release, she says: "You have no idea of the rigour of our imprisonment. . . . My mother was kept in ignorance of the existence of my brother in a room beneath her own. My aunt and I knew nothing of my mother's removal to the Conciergerie, and of her subsequent death I only heard in '95. My aunt was torn from me to be led to the scaffold. In vain I asked why she was taken from me. The door was shut and bolted, without a word in reply. My brother died in the room below me, and I knew nothing of it. Finally, I did not even hear of the well-merited death of Robespierre until a year after it happened." No wonder the sixteen-year-old

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girl grew into a stiff, unbending, sorrowful woman.

Skirting the Square du Temple by the Rue de Bretagne, we come first to the Rue des Archives, of which more anon, then to the Rue de Beauce, where, at the corner of a passage leading to the Marché des Enfants Rouge, Madame de Scudéry had her abode. About the middle of the seventeenth century she came to Paris, poor and aristocratic, to live with her brother, Georges de Scudéry, who wrote sundry plays of a very minor order. Her talents for writing becoming apparent, it is said that Georges locked her up in her room so many hours per diem to finish so many pages of romance, which he published as his own. However that may have been, the secret soon leaked out, and Mdlle. de Scudéry took her place as the leading literary lion among the "Précieuses" of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Volume after volume appeared, each one to the modern reader more wearisome than the last, but as eagerly acclaimed then as a new novel "by the author of Waverley" a century ago. Her long conversations between shepherds and shepherdesses on the subject of the tender passions were read with delight, enhanced by the knowledge that each character was one of their own circle thinly disguised. Her life has curious contrasts and parallels to her contemporary, Ninon's. Ninon de l'Enclos was beautiful and fascinating. Madame

## TO THE RUE DE RIVOLI

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de Scudéry was plain, positively ugly, and so dark that as Madame du Cornuel remarked, "She was destined by Providence to blot paper, for she sweated ink at every pore." Ninon's conquests were past counting; Madeleine, though an adept at discussing love by the volume, was never known to possess a single lover. Both ranked among the most popular hostesses of the day, though Ninon's "at homes" were far more amusing than the entertainments in the Rue de Beauce, and finally they both lived to a great age, Ninon to ninety, and Mdlle. de Scudéry to ninety-four.

Returning to the Rue du Temple, and continuing our way southwards, we pass the Rue Chapon on the right, once the abode of the "Filles de Joies" of mediæval days, whose ways were regulated and ordered in a code of laws drawn up by Charles V. On the same side of the street, the next turning but one, is the Rue Michel-le-Comte, where the Encyclopædist, d'Alembert, was brought up in a glazier's poor abode. We saw, in an earlier chapter, how his mother, Madam de Tencin, one of the Regent's ladies, had deposited him, an unwanted infant of a few weeks old, on the steps of St. John-le-Rond, in the Ile de Cité, and how an agent of police had pity on him. Six weeks later, his father, the Chevalier Destouches, hearing of his existence for the first time, reclaimed the child, and sought to put him out to nurse.

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After driving round half Paris, with the baby wrapped in his cloak, for all the women he saw declined to have anything to do with the neglected, unhealthy-looking child, he came to Madame Rousseau, the glazier's wife, who, having just lost her own baby, was induced to take the young d'Alembert instead. With this kindly old couple he grew up, and here he continued to live long after Madame du Deffand and Madame Geoffrin had fairly launched him in society. Had it not been for Mdlle. de Lespinasse, who persuaded him to occupy rooms over her own in the Rue St. Dominique, after an illness during which the close atmosphere of the Rousseau's house nearly killed him, he would no doubt have stayed in the Rue Michel-le-Comte till the end of his days, undisturbed by the havoc which his intimacy with Julie ultimately wrought in his sober, middle-aged life.

Opposite to the Rue St. Michel-le-Comte is the Rue des Haudriettes, which leads us into the Rue des Archives, just at the corner of that fine building, the Archives Nationales. Here is many an interesting record. The marriage certificate of Francis II and Mary Stuart, a treaty between Richard Cœur-de-Lion and Philip Augustus, Louis XVI's will, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, together with autographs, letters, and interesting documents of every kind are laid out in cases for inspection. But the building itself



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is our chief concern just now. It was in 1371 that Olivier de Clisson, a Breton noble, heroic in war, turbulent in peace, young, fiery and popular, was summoned to Paris by Charles V, who had the wisdom to see that here was material for either a faithful servant, or an exceedingly troublesome enemy. To ensure good faith, he gave Clisson a high position and four thousand livres to build himself a house in Paris. The scheme was successful, and the Hôtel de Clisson rose where the Archives are stored to-day. In the sixteenth century it was bought by Francis of Guise, father of the famous Guises of Catherine de Medici's day. The gateway to their house still stands, restored though it is, at No. 58 Rue des Archives. Schemes and plots galore were hatched in the old Hôtel. Swords wet with the blood of St. Bartholomew's Day have clanked into the courtyard. Ambitious hopes were raised to the heights, only to be frustrated again. By the end of the next century the powerful house of Guise was practically extinct, and in 1697 their home in the Marais was bought by François de Rohan-Soubise, member of another proud, dissolute family. The old Hôtel was enlarged to suit the tastes of the Regency, and the rooms decorated as we see many of them to-day. Aristocratic roéus and great ladies of frail virtue supped within the walls, and then passed away into oblivion in their turn. The Revolution made the Hôtel



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de Soubise National property, together with so many other fine buildings, and Napoleon, in reducing the chaos to order, had the Archives stored here, where they remain to this day.

At the back of the Archives Nationales, the Rue des Quatre Fils, a continuation of the Rue des Haudriettes, leads into the Rue Vieille du Temple. The Imprimerie, next door to the archives, with its entrance in this street, was once the Hôtel de Rohan, the town house of that haughty family which gave temporal princes to the peerage and spiritual princes (in name only, as a rule), to the church. The last of these princes of the church was the Cardinal de Rohan of Necklace fame, whose absurd credulity on that occasion served as a tool for chipping out the first stone of that ancient and noble edifice, royalty, which was soon to come tumbling down as quickly as the walls of the Bastille itself.

Nearly opposite to the printing office is the entrance to the Rue Barbette, which takes us back to the days of the old Hôtel St. Paul again, only instead of the simple patriarchal dignity of Charles the Wise, it is the mad ravings of his son, Charles VI, that concerns us now. When in the grip of one of his violent fits of insanity, his Queen, the dissolute Isabeau of Bavaria, retired to a house of her own, the Hôtel de Barbette, while her place at the Hôtel St. Paul was taken by a horse dealer's daughter, who was naïvely called "La Petite

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Reine." Isabeau's residence eventually came into the hands of Diane de Poitiers, who, according to some accounts, lived in it herself, and to others, put her complacent and insignificant husband, the Comte de Brézé, into it. At any rate, when she died, the Hôtel de Barbette became the property of her daughters, the Duchesses d'Aumale and de Bouillon, who pulled most of it down, and sold the land for building lots. The Rue Barbette was made upon the site, which extended right down to the Rue des Francs Bourgeois. There is a turret still in existence just at the corner of the last-named street and the Rue Vieille du Temple which most likely formed a part of Diane's house. She was a marvellous woman. Endowed with perfect health, she used to get up at six o'clock every morning, ride several leagues into the country, return to bed, where she remained until midday, receiving obsequious courtiers, whom she generally despised, and poets, whom she genuinely liked, after which she was ready for the business of the day. There is nothing surprising in her conquest of the sensitive heart of Francis I, but that Henry II should have fallen a victim to the mature charms of this woman of over forty, and have remained devoted to her to the day of his death, is a wonderful tribute to her personality. Tall and graceful, with a fine delicate skin, curly hair as black as an Italian's, and beautiful hands and feet, she was also

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endowed with perfect teeth, a rare gift in those days, and a pride that kept the weak Henry II in awe as well as admiration of her brilliant qualities. She never grew old. Brantôme saw her at the age of sixty-five, only a few months before her death. She had broken her leg not long before, her horse having fallen with her on the stony streets of Orleans. She was lame, she was old, she was in retirement, banished from court by order of Catherine de Medici, yet the historian found her as magnificently fascinating as when she had reigned a queen in everything but the name at the Tournelles. Such was the woman who once owned the little turret looking on to the Rue du Francs Bourgeois.

A little lower down the Rue Vieille du Temple, on the other side of the Rue des Francs Bourgeois, No. 47, was once the Hôtel de Hollande, where the Dutch ambassadors were lodged. Many a time the courtyard gates must have been flung back for the passing of the heavy state coach that was to take the ambassador jolting over the ten miles of rough stony road to Versailles, to make his bow to Louis XIV, and endeavour to read some piece of information he wanted in Colbert's stony, impenetrable countenance.

Just opposite the Hôtel de Hollande is the scene of a mediæval sensation, the murder of the Duke of Orleans by the Duke of Burgundy in 1407. When John the Good, the second

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king of the house of Valois, he who was taken prisoner by the English at Poitiers, left the great Duchy of Burgundy away from the crown to his younger son, he was unknowingly stirring up a storm that would spread misery and devastation over France for many a year. Philip, the first Duke of Burgundy, was a loyal subject to his brother, Charles V, but when the next generation arose, the storm burst. Jean Sans Peur had inherited the dukedom; Charles VI, the mad king, was a nonentity, and his younger brother, Louis, Duke of Orleans, was doing his best to make mischief in the kingdom. This Louis was a handsome man, open of hand, charming, witty, a patron of art and learning, irresistible to women, and as heartless a scoundrel as ever lived. A complete libertine, he was immensely proud of his conquests of all ranks, from the Queen downwards, and with execrable taste had a long gallery fitted up with portraits of all who had fallen victims to his charms, including among them his own wife, Valentine Visconti, and his cousin, Jean Sans Peur's wife, the Duchess of Burgundy. Not content with so doing, he showed the gallery to the Duke, trusting for security in his own high position as brother of the King. It is hardly necessary to say that he was a much-hated man in spite of his charms.

In 1407, the King, a hopeless lunatic, was shut up in the Hôtel St. Paul; the Queen,

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together with her brother-in-law, was wasting the revenues of the country in indecent orgies in the Hôtel de Barbette, and the people of Paris were nearly starving in the grip of an icy winter, the coldest known for centuries. On the night of November 23rd, Louis of Orleans was supping gaily with Isabeau, when a message was brought to him that he must attend the King at the Hôtel St. Paul at once. Bidding the Queen a tender farewell, he left her well-warmed apartments with reluctance, and went out into the cold, humming an air that her minstrel had just played. Mounting his mule, he rode out of the courtyard, attended by his servants, four in front carrying torches to light the pitch dark street, and two squires behind. Before he had gone many yards down what is now the Rue Vieille du Temple, armed men sprang out of a narrow passage, just opposite the Hôtel de Hollande, and flung him off his mule. "I am the Duke of Orleans," he shouted, thinking he had been set upon by thieves. "So much the better," was the grim reply as his assailants pierced him through and through with their daggers. His terrified attendants fled, all but his page, Jacob de Merre, who was killed in trying to cover his master's body with his own. Then when the work was done, the tall figure of Jean Sans Peur emerged from a doorway, examined the Duke's body to see if his men had finished their work, paid them leisurely, and rode off into the



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darkness. A few days later he retired to Flanders, only to return in ten years at the head of his Burgundian troops, when Perrinet Leclerc, the gatekeeper's son, stole the keys of the Porte de Buci to let him in.

The Rue Vieille du Temple comes to an end in the Rue du Roi de Sicile, named after Charles, King of Naples and Sicily, brother of St. Louis, who built himself a house here in the latter half of the thirteenth century. In due course it became the Hôtel of the Dukes de la Force, and in Revolutionary days it achieved grim fame as the Prison of La Force. The scene of some of the wildest frenzy of the September Massacres, it was here that the Princesse de Lamballe was murdered. For many years a stone post, which served as the block on which her head was cut off in order to be powdered and dressed by a terrified hairdresser, before it was paraded before the Queen's windows at the Temple, remained a silent witness of the hideous crime.

Leaving the Rue Roi de Sicile, we find ourselves back upon well-known ground once more, at the end of the Rue de Rivoli, just before it merges into the Rue St. Antoine.



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE PLACE DES VOSGES TO THE RUE ST. HONORÉ

RETURNING once more to the Place des Vosges, we will go by way of the old Rue des Francs Bourgeois through the Marais, till we leave it again in the region of Les Halles, the great market of Paris. Of all the famous inhabitants of the Marais, of Paris itself one might almost say, there is no one so alive and so attractive as Madame de Sévigné, whose Hôtel we come to at the Musée Carnavalet. Fate dealt kindly with her in her life. Having given her a weak, unworthy husband, it relieved her and the world of his presence before he could do more than prove conclusively that his death was no misfortune. Her long widowhood was a pleasant time, blest with many good friends, with sufficient money as a rule for all the comforts of life, with a son, who, in spite of many faults, was devoted to her, and a daughter to whom she was devoted. Given a singularly happy disposition, an unfailing sense of humour, a good, sound intellect, and a charm which enabled her to make full use of all her other gifts, here were materials enough to provide much happiness for herself and all who came in contact with her. Fate was kind after her

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death as well. Her letters have nearly all been kept for the joy of countless generations, and most of her homes and surroundings still remain to help us to revivify that personality which shines so clearly through all her many volumes of letters. Inside the Carnavalet, Madame de Sévigné is rather lost among the thousand and one relics that go to form the Museum of the City of Paris, but the room in which she wrote her letters still exists, and no great effort of the imagination is required to re-create that gracious presence. Here she sat retailing all the gossip of Paris for Madame de Grignan far away in Provence; how the court has thrown off all its gaiety and is plunged, to all outward appearance at any rate, deep in devotion; what a magnificent sermon Bourdaloue preached at St. Roch; how Madame de Brinvilliers was brought back again to Paris; what an amusing supper she had had at the de Lavardins after the opera, the night before. It was in this same room that she received her friends and neighbours of the Marais, or discussed her business affairs with her kindly old uncle, the Abbé de Coulanges, the Bien-Bon as she called him, who had his own rooms in the great house. These walls have listened to many a conversation between her and Madame de Grignan, on the rare occasions when the latter came to Paris, and some arguments, too, for mother and daughter were by no means always in agreement. In

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fact, Madame de Grignan, "that eternal daughter of hers," as Fitzgerald called her, the selfish, spoilt beauty, must have been a singularly irritating visitor in many ways. However, we owe her two debts of gratitude. In the first place, she lived in Provence, a three weeks journey from Paris in those days, thereby causing the letters to be written, and secondly, for having kept them when they were written. It is pleasant, in a city where so many memories are grim and terrible, to linger on in Madame de Sévigné's company, but it is time to continue our walk along the Rue des Francs Bourgeois, and we take our leave, offering to all who love old Paris the same piece of advice on the subject of the letters, that she gave her daughter on the subject of Nicole's devotional works:—"If you have not yet read them, I wish that you would do so; if you have, then read them over again with fresh attention."

No. 25 Rue des Francs Bourgeois is a fine old sixteenth century house, the Hôtel de Lamoignon, built for Diane de France, the daughter of Henry II. Her mother was most likely Diane de Poitiers, and she was one of Henry's favourite children, so much so that besides legitimising her, he gave her the title of Duchesse d'Angoulême as well. Her device of hunting symbols with the letter D may still be seen in the courtyard, entered from No. 24 Rue Pavée, a turning to the left. Diane played

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a considerable part in endeavouring to reconcile the last Valois kings with Henry of Navarre, to whom she was always a trusted friend. Indeed, Henry declared he would take her word before any woman's and most men's. At her death the house passed to another illegitimate scion of royalty, the son of Charles IX and Marie Touchet, who was given as well her title of Angoulême. This Charles of Angoulême and his wife are noteworthy for one curious fact; he was born in the year 1573, and she died in 1713, just a hundred and forty years after her husband's birth. Many a moral lesson on the futility of human greatness could the old lady have drawn, had she been of that mind, for between her husband's birth and her own death, the Guises had fallen, Henry IV had been assassinated, Marie de Medici had died in poverty, Richelieu had risen and died, Mazarin had done the same, Fouquet, the superb Superintendent de Finance, had languished in his prison at Pignerol; soldiers, statesmen, preachers and poets had each had their day, and now, as her life drew to a close, she might have seen Louis XIV, the Roi Soleil himself, sinking towards the grave, leaving an impoverished country behind him, and no heirs but a delicate child, incapable of ruling for many years to come.

Long before her death she left the Hôtel in the Rue des Francs Bourgeois. In 1658 it was bought by a wealthy President of Parlia-

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ment, Gilbert de Lamoignon, who gave it the name by which it is known to this day. He was a patron of literature, this rich lawyer. Boileau, Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, and many a lesser star have passed into the courtyard on their way to partake of the good things prepared by Gilbert de Lamoignon's chef, in consequence of which conversation would grow brilliant, and the evening would last until fairly put to shame by summer sunlight.

No. 31, not far from the Hôtel de Lamoignon, is the Hôtel d'Albret. When poor Scarron died, leaving his widow nearly destitute, her friends did their best for her, by petitioning Anne of Austria for a small pension on her behalf, and by asking her to pay visits at their houses as well. The Hôtel d'Albret was one of the places at which she received a kindly welcome. At the same time, if somebody's carriage was to be called, if the fire needed making up, if a boring visitor had to be entertained, if an order was to be sent to the cook, then Madame Scarron was asked to do it. She seems to have taken this "poor relationship" in good part, outwardly at least, and was duly humble and grateful when the Duchesse d'Albret, hoping to do a good turn to "that poor Madame Scarron," presented her to Madame de Montespan, the reigning mistress of Versailles, in this very No. 31 Rue des Francs Bourgeois before which we are standing now. The modest, quiet appearance, and

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unassuming manners of the poet's widow pleased the proud beauty so much that, being in need of a capable discreet woman to take charge of her as yet unacknowledged children, she offered the post to Madame Scarron, who accepted it at once with the deepest gratitude. The Duchesse d'Albret was delighted, no doubt, that her poor friend was suitably settled at last. How little she could have foreseen that the meeting between these two women, the one so great, and the other so insignificant, would change the whole history of Louis XIV's reign, and bring results upon France which would be felt long after she and all her friends were dead and buried.

On the left hand side of the street is the Rue des Guillemites, where parts of the old city walls, built by Philip Augustus, are still to be seen. Just here too, next to the Mont de Piété, is a church, Nôtre Dame des Blancs Manteaux. It is modern, and offers no great attraction, but it is built on the site of the chapel of the old convent of the Blancs Manteaux. It was to this chapel that the body of the Duke of Orleans was brought after that incident in the Rue Vieille du Temple, under cover of the dark November night. Here he lay in state before burial, while all the nobility of France passed in front of the bier and sprinkled the corpse with holy water. When the Duke of Burgundy passed in his turn, declared a chronicler of the day, the dead man's wounds



## THE PLACE DES VOSGES TO

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began to bleed afresh, a sure sign that the murderer was standing by.

As the Rue des Francs Bourgeois loses its interest when it becomes the Rue Rambuteau, we will turn southwards down the Rue des Archives, a little way until we reach the Rue Simon le Franc. There is much to interest us in this network of quaint, narrow streets which lie between us and the Boulevard de Sebastopol, but few of them are more picturesque than the Rue Brisemiche, the first turning to the left out of the Rue Simon le Franc. Here we are plunged at once into that mediæval Paris of narrow streets which served their purpose well enough when wheeled vehicles were hardly known, and space within the city walls was too valuable to waste in giving unnecessary light and air to the occupants of those tall old houses which look straight across into each other's windows. Fixed to the walls, strong iron hooks still remain to show where the chains were hung from one house to another to close the street to horsemen at night. As in the Place des Vosges, it is only the human interest that has changed. The surroundings carry us straight back to the days of Henry II and Diane, to Catherine de Medici and her sons. It may well be that some gallant knight in full armour came out of that doorway which now leads to a cobbler's shop, mounted a powerful charger held by a page, and clattered off on his way to

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the tilt-yard at the Tournelles. Or it is easy to imagine Charles IX in one of his youthful follies, going over the roofs one night with a company of wild friends, leaping from one house to another, peering in at dormer windows, frightening the occupants, crossing from one street to another on a plank, chased by the archers, and finally tired out with his exertions, getting back to the Louvre in the small hours of the morning.

The Rue Brisemiche would have served Dumas as a setting for fifty different scenes; it is one of the few perfect remains of that ancient Paris which has so nearly disappeared, and yet it is safe to say that not one in a hundred of the visitors who profess to know Paris well, has ever heard of it.

This quaint old lane brings us out by way of the Rue du Clôître St. Merry, into the Rue de la Verrerie, where the glassmakers of the city once displayed their wares. Passing the sixteenth century church of St. Merry, we cross the Rue St. Martin, the old Roman road to the north, running straight as an arrow through Paris and its suburbs. When the Romans and their gods had left France forever, this road to the northern provinces was named after St. Martin, the Bishop of Tours. According to the old monastic legends, it was in this street that the saint, while staying in Paris, healed a leper by embracing him, an act which Henry I commemorated in the eleventh century

## THE PLACE DES VOSGES TO

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by building a priory on the spot. The restored remains of the priory are included among the buildings of the Conservatoire des Arts and Métiers erected upon its site, not far from the Porte St. Martin. The Conservatoire is too high up the street to be included in our walk, so we will pass on through the Rue des Lombards, the quarter given up to those wonderful Lombard merchants, till we come to the Rue Quincampoix, the scene of what was considered at the time a miracle even greater than St. Martin's.

When the affairs of the realm were examined at the death of Louis XIV, the Government were appalled at what was found. "Both the king and his subjects are ruined," wrote the Duc de Noailles to Madame de Maintenon, "nothing has been paid for several years; confidence is entirely gone. Never has the monarchy been in such a condition, though it has several times been near its ruin." It was at this juncture that John Law, a citizen of Edinburgh, an expert mathematician, who had wasted a considerable amount of brains and money upon fashionable living, and had redeemed them by a close study of financial affairs during an enforced sojourn on the continent in consequence of killing his man in a duel, came forward with a scheme for relieving the Government of its difficulties. His plan was simple enough. There was not enough gold in existence to supply the world's

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ever-increasing need for money; therefore he proposed that in addition to actual coin, a paper currency, based upon public credit, should be issued. The Government declined to take any part in the scheme, but permitted Law to found a bank of his own. This was the origin of Law's Bank in the Rue Quincampoix, the stories of which sound as fantastic in these days as the doings of Monte Cristo.

We have not sufficient space to go into all the details of that amazing financial "boom." It is enough to say that once the Bank was fairly started, Law turned his attention to another enterprise in connection with it: a vast scheme by which the French possessions in America should yield up such wealth as the East India Company brought to England. The Mississippi Company was formed. The 500 livre shares were selling for about 300 livres, when Law, to stimulate the zeal of the purchasers, declared that he would redeem two hundred of those shares at par six months from the date of issue. The seed of gambling in stocks was sown. It was a novelty, and therefore far more amusing than gambling at cards. Prices rose at once. In April, 1790, the 500 livre share stood at 300, in May it was at par, in July it was at 1,000, in September 5,000, in November 10,000, while at the end of the year it was realising 15,000 and 20,000. Paris went mad with excitement. If you possessed ten livres to-day, it would be worth

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twenty to-morrow, fifty perhaps next week, so away to the Rue Quincampoix to invest in Mississippi stock. From morning till night Law's doorstep was surrounded by a seething, struggling mob. Every room, every cellar even, in the street was taken at a thousand times its value, and turned into a gaming establishment in which millions of francs worth of stock changed hands daily. A cobbler let his stall, filthy and reeking of old leather, for a hundred livres a day, a locksmith made a fortune by keeping pens, paper, ink and a table in his shop for the convenience of those who wished to sign transfers, and a hunchback lived in comfort to the end of his days by offering his hump, at a high price, for the same purpose. Class distinctions were thrown to the winds. Duchesses, priests, cooks, peers, clerks, lawyers, courtiers, shopkeepers, lackeys, actresses, princes, all pushed and scrambled in the mad struggle for wealth. The Duke de Bourbon, the Regent and the Prince de Conti made millions, a poor landscape painter, living in a garret, suddenly possessed money for diamonds, horses, coaches, servants, and gold plate; a milliner's apprentice made enough to buy a large estate. Prices rose, but fortunes increased. Law was made controller-general of the kingdom, and Paris was ready to fall upon its knees and worship him whenever he appeared.

Only a few far-sighted speculators began to sell out, and invested the money in land or gold plate.



## THE RUE ST. HONORÉ

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Then the decline set in. Once more, it would take too long to enumerate the causes of the crisis. There was a run upon the bank. Investors clamoured for the gold that did not exist. The price of the share fell like a stone from the top of a precipice. Ruin fell upon the Rue Quincompoix. Blank, despairing faces took the place of the jubilant crowd who had paid twenty livres for five minutes on the hunchback's hump. The doors of the Bank were closed, and Law was in hiding, no one knew where. The mob was ready to tear him from limb to limb could they have found him. Suicides, murders, attacks of lunacy; one horror came on top of another. Twenty-seven bodies were taken from the nets in the river at St. Cloud in a single day, and revolution was narrowly avoided.

The panic ran its course, like everything else. So many princes and nobles were enriched, so many of lesser degree were ruined, so many made enough to live in comfort, so many found the Seine their only alternative. Law himself escaped from France to die in Venice many years later a poverty-stricken, broken-hearted man. He had lived before his time. His ideas were sound, but the country was not ready for them. As to the Rue Quincampoix, its history closed with the history of the Bank, and riches and speculation knew its cobblestones no more.

Following the Rue des Lombards, we cross



## THE PLACE DES VOSGES TO

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the busy Boulevard de Sebastopol, and find ourselves in the second of the old Roman roads leading northwards, the Rue St. Denis. Many a king has entered Paris in state with his queen, and left it again for the last time by the same route to rejoin his forbears in the vaults of St. Denis. All the way from the city gate to Nôtre Dame, streets have been decorated with tapestries of silk to greet a queen, or hung with black as a last farewell to a king.

Isabeau of Bavaria, of whom we have heard much, made her state entry by way of the Rue and Porte St. Denis. All day long the crowd had waited for her coming. In order to pass the time, little theatres were arranged for the acting of mystery plays. The seven virtues, with the aid of much ribald wit, drove the seven deadly sins down into the fiery pit of hell; clowns fought comic duels amid roars of laughter from the bystanders, and minstrels made music with harp and lute all along the route. Charles VI, impatient to see his bride, disguising himself and his friend, Savoisie, bade the latter get up behind him on a trooper's horse, and together they rode off to the Châtelet to see the procession pass. They pressed forward through the crowd to catch a glimpse of Isabeau riding under a richly embroidered canopy, with such success that the guards, cursing them for two idle fellows, drove them back with a shower of blows, an incident which added much to the hilarity of those gathered

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at the Hôtel St. Paul when they heard the story in the evening.

Henry IV entered Paris by this street one Sunday in July, 1793, having just been made a good Catholic; the people falling on their knees shedding tears of joy and thankfulness as he passed on his way to Nôtre Dame to hear the Mass with which he had won his crown.

A few yards up the Rue St. Denis we come to the Rue des Innocents, built upon the site of the ancient Cemetery of the Innocents. With sound, practical sense, the architect decided that as nothing keeps a house so dry as good cellars beneath it, the best and most economical plan would be to make use of the old "charniers" for that purpose. Hence it is that to this day the vaults that served as burying places for the wealthy dead of a past age are cellars to the cafés and cheap restaurants used by the carriers to the Halles nearby. Here, too, is the Square des Innocents, celebrated for the magnificent Renaissance fountain which ornaments it. Jean Goujon, the designer was killed in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, still working, it is said, at his fountain, so deeply engrossed in what he was doing as to be well-nigh oblivious of the turmoil around him.

From the Rue des Innocents we can make our way via the Rue des Halles to the Rue St. Honoré, down which we went in the first chapter.

## CHAPTER XV

### FROM THE LOUVRE TO THE PORTE ST. DENIS

THE end of the last chapter found us back once more in the well-known region of the Rues St. Honoré and de Rivoli. Now, for our next walk we will go northwards again, taking the Quai du Louvre for our starting point, and picking up whatever historical threads we can find, before we reach the world of the boulevards once more at the Porte St. Denis.

Leaving the Quai we go up the Rue de l'Arbre Sec, which played its part in history once, though the most prominent object in it to-day is the huge building of the Magasins de la Samaritaine. On the left side of the street is the old church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, the bell of which was the first to give the signal for the massacre of the Huguenots in the darkness of the night on August 24th, 1572. No. 4 was once the Hôtel of the Musketeers, where the real d'Artagnan, a fine man, though less superb than Dumas' creation, grew grey in the service of the king. But the prototype is a mere shadow compared to the creation, our d'Artagnan, who springs from his panting horse at the door and dashes into the house to find his three faithful friends

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who are to assist him in outwitting the latest schemes of Richelieu's.

At the corner adjoining the Rue de Rivoli, an inscription records that here was the Hôtel de Montbazou where Coligny was assassinated. The stern old Admiral had been brought here on August 22nd, wounded in the shoulder by a shot fired from one of the windows of the Louvre as he was leaving the palace. Charles IX visited him here the next day, and swore to hang the assassin. Coligny's friends urged him to leave Paris, for his wound was slight, but the old man trusted in the King's goodwill. As soon as the bell of St. Germain l'Auxerrois roused all sleepers from their beds, the door of Coligny's house was battered with kicks and blows. He guessed what was coming, and bade his servants escape. They got out on to the roof, and the Admiral was left alone. When the door below was broken down, a party of Guise's men led by one Besme, a German, rushed upstairs. "Are you the Admiral?" he asked roughly. "I am," replied Coligny. "My age and infirmity are worthy of consideration, but you cannot shorten my life much." He had hardly finished the sentence before Besme's boar-spear was in his heart, and the other assassins had hacked him with their daggers. "Besme, Besme!" shouted Guise's impatient voice from the courtyard below, "is it done?" "It is, monseigneur," replied the German, flinging

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the body headlong out of the window. "I know him; it is he," cried the Duke, eagerly, as he wiped the blood from the old man's face; then, kicking the corpse out of the way, he left the place to join in the general carnage.

Another scene, hardly less grim, was enacted within the old Hôtel. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, out of all the many witty dissolute young Abbés who belonged to the fashionable world of Paris, none was more witty and less priestly than the Abbé de Rancé, who divided his time and the revenues of his various benefices between hunting, the gaming table, and his mistress. This mistress was the beautiful Mdlle. de Montbazon. It was one evening in the year 1700 that he returned to Paris after a week or two of hunting in the country, and made his way straight to the Hôtel de Montbazon in the Rue de l'Arbre Sec. He entered the house by a secret staircase, tapped discreetly at her door, and receiving no answer, peeped cautiously in. A hideous sight met his eyes. On a bier in front of him lay a leaden coffin not yet closed, with candles at either end creating a dim light in the heavily curtained room. In it lay the body of his mistress, and, crowning horror of all, the head had been cut off, and lay, all stained with blood, at the foot of the coffin. Mdlle. de Montbazon had died suddenly of smallpox. All her attendants had fled for fear of the infection, the hastily-ordered coffin was too

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short, and, in order to save time and trouble, her head had been cut off, and left as de Rancé found it. The shock to him was too appalling to be imagined. He was all but mad with grief and horror. For days on end he wandered aimlessly about the country. Then, coming to himself at last, he renounced the world for ever. Horses, pictures, plate, furniture, and books were sold. He allowed himself barely enough food to keep body and soul together, while his whole time was passed in prayer and religious study. He gave up all his benefices except one, the Abbey of La Trappe, away in the wilds of Normandy. From henceforth Paris knew him no more; he gave up even his name, and for the remaining years of his life he was known merely as the Abbot of La Trappe, the head of the famous monastery, in which he laid down the rules of unbroken silence, constant labour, and hard living, for which it was distinguished.

Entering the Rue St. Honoré at the top of the Rue de l'Arbre Sec, we leave it again by the Rue Vauvilliers. No. 30 of this street was once the Hôtel de Cherbourg, a cheap lodging house, where an unemployed artillery officer, Napoleon Buonaparte by name, had a room in the autumn of 1787. He sat all day in his fireless room, reading military history and drawing up plans of campaign, only going out for scanty meals at a small restaurant near at hand. Of money he had barely enough to



## FROM THE LOUVRE TO

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live on, and of prospects there seemed to be absolutely none. His time was not yet come.

From the Rue de Vauvilliers a narrow lane leads to the Rue de Viarmes, which encircles the Bourse du Commerce. When the struggle between Catholics and Huguenots was at its height, the Italian astrologer, Ruggieri, cast Catherine de Medici's horoscope. He concluded with a solemn warning to beware of St. Germain, which was fatally connected with the end of her life. From that day she refused to go near the Château of St. Germain-en-Laye; and the Louvre, together with her new palace of the Tuileries, might be too near to the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. With this idea in her head, she lost interest in the Tuileries and set about building herself a residence well to the north of the Louvre, where the Bourse du Commerce stands to-day. A fine doric column stands beside the Bourse. That is all that is left of the Hôtel de la Reine, as it was called. Through the centre of the column, which is ten feet in diameter and about ninety feet high, a spiral staircase winds its way to the summit. This, according to tradition, was the secret way by which Catherine and Ruggieri ascended to study the heavens, and read the secrets of the future, while Paris lay silent and sleeping around them. As to the horoscope, Catherine was not allowed to evade her destiny. It was while at Blois that she became seriously ill and sent for a priest. Her

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own confessor was not forthcoming, and a stranger came to the Queen's bedside. Before beginning her confession, she asked him his name. "My name is Saint Germain, Madam," he replied. Catherine fell back in horror on her pillows. She knew that her hour had come at last, and that her efforts to cheat the stars were of no avail. She never rose from her bed again. So, at least, tradition has it, and we may use tradition to give colour to those romances of the streets.

Leaving the Bourse du Commerce we pass in front of St. Eustache, the burial place of Colbert. Mirabeau's funeral service took place here in 1791, when, as we saw, the gunfire brought plaster down from the walls. In 1793 a great Feast of Reason was held here to rival the orgies at Nôtre Dame. According to Mercier's description, quoted by Carlyle, "The interior of the choir represented a landscape decorated with cottages and boskets of trees. Round the choir stood tables overloaded with bottles, with sausages, pork-puddings, pastries and other meats. The guests flowed in and out through all the doors; whosoever presented himself took part in the good things: children of eight, girls as well as boys, put hand to plate, in sign of Liberty; they drank also of the bottles, and their prompt intoxication created laughter. Reason sat in azure mantle aloft, in a serene manner, Cannoniers, pipe in mouth, serving her as

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acolytes. And out of doors were mad multitudes dancing round the bonfire of Chapel balustrades, of Priests' and Canons' stalls; and the dancers—I exaggerate nothing—the dancers nigh bare of breeches, neck and breast naked, stockings down, went whirling and spinning, like those Dust-vortexes, forerunners of Tempest and Destruction."

Passing the east end of St. Eustache where the Rues Montmartre, Montorgueil and de Turbigo meet at the apex of a triangle, we take the middle one, the Rue Montorgueil, and follow it till we come to the Rue Etienne Marcel. Here, at No. 20, strangely at variance with the rest of the street, rises the Tower of Jean Sans Peur, the last remains of the splendid residence which the Dukes of Burgundy owned in Paris. The scene most likely of Jean Sans Peur's furious tirades against the Duke of Orleans, and of the laying of the plot to assassinate him; it was used as a theatre in later days, and saw the first performance of Corneille's "Cid" and Racine's "Phèdre."

From this mediæval relic we go northwards by the Rue Dussoubs to the Rue Réaumur, where a passage between Nos. 100 and 101 leads into the Cour des Miracles. Who does not remember Victor Hugo's description of this famous quarter? "That dreaded Cour des Miracles, into which no honest man had ever penetrated at such an hour, a magic circle, in which the officers of the Châtelet and the

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sergeants of the provost, who ventured within it, were disposed of in a trice; the haunt of thieves; a hideous wen on the face of Paris: a sewer disgoring every morning and receiving every night that fetid torrent of vice, mendicancy and roguery, which always overflows the streets of great capitals; a monstrous hive, to which all the drones of the social order retired at night, with their booty; the hospital of imposture where the gipsy, the unfrocked monk, the ruined scholar, the blackguards of all nations, Spaniards, Italians, Germans; of all religions, Jews, Christians, Mahometans, idolators, covered with painted wounds, beggars by day, transmogrified themselves into banditti at night; immense robing room, in short, whither all the actors of that eternal comedy which theft, prostitution and murder are performing in the streets of Paris, resorted at that period to dress and undress."

No trace of those ancient rookeries is left now, but the Cour des Miracles is worth visiting, were it only to see what a picture a master-mind like Victor Hugo's could paint out of the past. "A fine piece of descriptive writing, but too highly coloured," is an objection that may be made. My reply would be the same as Turner's to that outspoken lady who declared that she could see nothing in the sunset in the least like the colour he was using in his picture of it. "Ah, Madame, but don't you wish you could?"

## FROM THE LOUVRE TO

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However, there is a much later association with the Cour des Miracles than the days of Louis XI, as put before us in "Nôtre Dame," which, by the way, every lover of old Paris should read. About the middle of the eighteenth century a certain Jean du Barry, a man of good birth, came to Paris to seek his fortune. Fortune was particularly evasive just then, and Jean, who was not particular as to the means by which he sought her, descended to keeping a gambling hell in the Cour des Miracles. He had his mistress here, too, one Jeanne Bécu, the daughter of an erring monk, and a servant girl. This Jeanne was beautiful enough to please the King, to whom she had been shown by Lebel, an acquaintance of du Barry's who acted as provider of his Majesty's secret pleasures. Louis XV was so much taken with her that he wished to receive her openly at Court, but even he required something better in the way of credentials than she could produce. The ingenious Jean du Barry had a solution of the difficulty ready. In return for a handsome consideration he would marry the girl to his brother Guillaume (he himself could not oblige unfortunately, having a wife already). The said Guillaume, being handsomely provided for too, having bestowed the highly respectable name of Comtesse du Barry upon the monk's daughter, would retire into the background for good and all, leaving his wife to fulfil her amazing destiny at Versailles.



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The offer was accepted, the money was paid, Madame du Barry went to court, Guillaume returned to the country, and Jean du Barry, leaving the Cour des Miracles retired to Toulouse, where he lived in great affluence until, caught up in the toils of the Revolution, he ended his disreputable life on the scaffold.

Curiously enough, another inhabitant of the Cour des Miracles was Hébert, the Revolutionary, the creator of "Père Duchesne." Hébert at home, the husband of Françoise Goupil, the ex-nun, was a gentle, neatly dressed, little man, devoted to his wife, resembling nothing so much as a respectable clerk with a good salary. Hébert at business was a loathsome brute, who conceived the idea of accusing Marie Antoinette through her son, who invented those metaphors which made the mob fairly rock with laughter, metaphors such as "the national razor" and "the vis à vis of M. Sanson"; neat catchy phrases like "trying on Capet's cravat," or "going to ask the time at the little casement." All-powerful for a while, Nemesis had not forgotten Père Duchesne. At four o'clock in the morning of March 14th, 1794, a trying hour for the bravest of men, Hébert was arrested and carried off to the Conciergerie. Robespierre had finished with him, and the sooner useless tools were discarded the better. The next journey was from the Conciergerie to the guillotine. "Ah, Père Duchesne," jeered the mob, "who



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is going to be shaved by the national razor now?" "It's your turn to go and look through the little window." "Come and see Père Duchesne sneeze into the basket." Never had Hébert's jests been so popular. Even Sanson, the executioner, caught the infection of humour. With gentle playfulness, he jumped the "national razor" up and down over the head of the wretched man, before giving him the coup de grâce, while the onlookers fairly had to hold their sides, they laughed so at the piquancy of the joke.

Turning westwards along the Rue Réamur, we come to the Rue Cléry, which runs diagonally across it. Corneille, poor and unappreciated in spite of the "Cid," lived in this street, but it is with the revolutionary days that it is chiefly connected. At its northern end, close to the Porte St. Denis, the royalist, de Batz, resolved to make one last attempt to rescue the King on the way to the scaffold on January 21st, 1793. He collected together 150 confederates willing to die for the cause, and his plan was so simple that there seemed a fair chance of success. They would assemble disguised as workmen, with daggers and pistols hidden under their clothes, at the end of the Rue du Cléry, and, as the King's carriage passed, seize the King and carry him off to a place of safety. Unluckily a spy was in their midst, information was carried to the Committee of Public Safety, and long before daylight

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broke on that chilly January morning, all but a few of the conspirators were under lock and key. De Batz, who was in hiding, had neither been captured nor had he heard of the failure of their plans. A little before eight he reached the Rue du Cléry, but only seven confederates met him instead of a hundred and fifty. This little handful of men decided to make the attempt as a forlorn hope. The procession approached, the eight men rushed at the guards: several of them were cut down at once, De Batz and another escaped, and the King's carriage passed slowly on, its progress hardly impeded by the last effort of the devoted men.

In an old house, also near the Porte St. Denis, lived Louis Chénier, father of two sons, Marie Joseph and André. In 1794 Marie-Joseph, who acted as the poet of the Terror, was a man of some power, while André, also a poet, lay in the prison of St. Lazare. In spite of differences of opinion, Marie-Joseph was attached to his brother, and hoped to save him from the guillotine. The best way to do this was to remain silent, there being a fair chance that André might be passed over and forgotten. Old Louis Chénier, the father, could not be made to understand this. His sons had formerly assured him of the equity of revolutionary magistrates, and his brain refused to take in new developments. He petitioned the Prisons Committee; the only result was closer confinement for his son. He

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petitioned again; the next day, on applying at St. Lazare, he was told he was not to be allowed to see André. He returned to the Rue du Cléry in tears. Time passed on, every day sent a fresh batch of victims to the guillotine; the old man wrote petition after petition in spite of the protestations of Marie-Joseph, who, having joined Robespierre's enemies, knew that the duration of the Terror would probably be short, and that if only his father would have patience, André would almost certainly be saved. But patience was the last quality the old man possessed.

On the 4th of Thermidor, haunting as usual the outside of the St. Lazare prison, a turnkey, filled with brutal enjoyment of Louis Chénier's agony, told him that thirty of his prisoners had been despatched to the guillotine that day, and thirty more would follow to-morrow. This was the last straw. He rushed off to Barrère's house, and after the most humble supplications, the great man consented to see him. The member of the Convention, cold and polite, played with him as a cat plays with a mouse. Old Chénier appealed to his heart; he might just as well have appealed to the heart of one of the chimères at Nôtre Dame. However, Barrère seemed moved at last. "Very well," he said, as he dismissed his visitor, "your son shall come out in three days time." All his grief turned to joy in one moment, the father went back to the Rue Cléry, rejoicing

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in the thought that he had saved his son, and determined not to reveal the fact until it was accomplished. For three days he remained in perfect peace and tranquillity, exhausted after the agonising emotions of the past week. The 7th of Thermidor came. He stayed at home in the Rue Cléry anxiously awaiting André's return. At last he heard a step on the stairs. He rushed to the door. It was not André: it was Marie-Joseph, with that in his face that turned his father to stone. There they stood, face to face, the one not daring to ask, or the other to reveal the truth. Then the old man tottered, and fell back on the floor with a wild cry of despair. Barrère had kept his word. André Chénier had come out indeed, but he had come out to the guillotine. Two days later Robespierre fell, and the Terror was over. Marie-Joseph was right. If only the father had had patience, the son would have been saved!

Having arrived at the Porte St. Denis in tracing out these two tragedies of the Revolution, we may as well forget the past for a while in the amusement of watching the ever-changing kaleidoscope of the traffic on the Boulevards, or in a lunch at the famous Marguery's in the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, close at hand.

## CHAPTER XVI

### ROUND ABOUT THE PALAIS ROYAL

IN the streets round the Palais Royal we can find the history of centuries in the course of a short morning's walk. We will begin by crossing the Rue St. Honoré, just opposite the Louvre, and entering the Rue Croix des Petits Champs. The house marked 21, and its predecessor on the same site, has seen many curious vicissitudes. Built, in the first place, as the Hôtel de Bretagne, it came into the hands of Catherine de Lorraine, Duchesse de Montpensier. "The little lame devil," whom Henry III would have liked to burn, was the sister of the Guises. Clever as her brother, beautiful and fascinating enough to corrupt the most honest man who ever lived, there was not a plot concocted during those troublous times that she had not a hand in. It was she who carried a neat pair of gold scissors at her girdle, ready to tonsure the King when her brothers, having captured him as he returned to the Louvre from La Roquette, should have forced him to abdicate the throne and retire into a monastery. But once more we are poaching upon Dumas ground, and readers must go to the "Forty-five Guards-

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THE LOUVRE, FROM THE TOUR DE NESLE.

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men," in the great Valois series of romances, for all the picturesque details.

In due course the Guises fell, and Catherine de Lorraine's beauty mouldered away to dust in her coffin. The next occupant of note in the Hôtel de Bretagne was Bertrand de Bazinière, Anne of Austria's treasurer, rich with the proceeds of plunder and speculation. A few years passed in the enjoyment of amassing yet more wealth, and then he, too, went his way.

A queen was the next to enter its portals. Henrietta-Maria, the widow of Charles I, restored to all the comforts of life by her son's return to England, had no wish to share in his triumphs. The horrors of the Civil War, and the privations of poverty, left her with a desire for peace. In 1661 she took the Hôtel de Bretagne, but at the end of a year she left it for the still greater peace of a convent at Chaillot. A little later still a nephew of Colbert's, the Comte de Maulevrier, lived in the house, and created a sensation in the fashionable world when he committed suicide by jumping from an upper window in 1706. Finally it became the home of Dr. Guillotin, that benevolent doctor, and deputy of the States General, who invented the clever little machine for the painless decapitation of criminals. It seems as if in the usual ironical order of things, the doctor himself should have tried the virtues of his invention, but such was not the case. He was destined to see the

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chaos which resulted from the efforts of the States General, from which so much was hoped. He was destined to see heads in thousands fall by means of his invention, but he was also destined to live through the turmoil, a miserable grief-stricken man, and die, probably within these old walls, in the early years of last century.

Passing by way of Rue Montesquieu into the Rue des Bons Enfants, we stand on the site of a great house of mediæval days, the Hôtel d'Armagnac. On that May night in 1418, when Perrinet Leclerc opened the Porte de Buci to Jean Sans Peur, one of the first places to which he led his troops was this Hôtel d'Armagnac, near to Philip Augustus's stronghold, the Louvre. Bernard d'Armagnac, the Constable, escaped in disguise, and took refuge in a stone-mason's house. This man betrayed him to the Burgundians, who dragged him to one of the dungeons of the Conciergerie, to which he had condemned many poor wretches before. Four weeks later the mob broke into the prison, seized the Constable, slew him there and then, and threw his body into the street.

When Louis XI came to the throne he set himself to break the power of both the Burgundians and Armagnacs, who could stir the whole country into turmoil as they pleased. The Count d'Armagnac, grandson of the murdered Constable, was disgraced upon some pretext and condemned to death. With a horrible refinement of cruelty, Louis ordered

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that his children, the eldest of whom was only twelve, should be placed under the scaffold, bareheaded, dressed in white, with their hands folded in supplication, there to be drenched with their father's blood when it spurted from his headless body, as a warning never to raise a finger against the power of the King.

Leaving the gloomy associations of the Rue des Bons Enfants, we turn to the left through the quaint old Passage Henry IV into the Place and Rue de Valois. No. 4 is now the Grand Hôtel du Palais Royal, but rather more than a century ago it was the quiet, unpretentious place to which Charles Lamb directed his steps, on dismounting from the diligence which brought him on his first and only trip to Paris.

Next door is the Boeuf à la Mode Restaurant, once the Hôtel Melusine, built by Richelieu, in the days when the Palais Royal itself was new.

To the right of the Rue de Valois is the Rue Radziwell, reached by the Rue Bailiff, which skirts the Banque de France, a huge building on the site of the house of the ill-fated Princesse de Lamballe, which leads into the Rue des Petits Champs. On the left side of this street is the Jardin du Palais Royal, and on the right the Bibliothèque Nationale, the palace built by Mazarin for his own use. The astute Italian was deeply imbued with a love for the beautiful in art. Out of these "paltry savings" of his, which, by the way, amounted to about a hundred million francs at the time of his

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death, he had furnished the Palais Mazarin with magnificent furniture, costly books, and valuable pictures, which last he loved even more than he loved his gold. The portals of the splendid mansion were kept by guards, who wore his own livery. His coach, like the King's, was escorted by musketeers. "The Councils were held in his bedroom while he was being shaved or dressed, and often he would play with his bird or pet monkey while important matters of state were under discussion. He never asked anyone to be seated in his chamber—not even the Chancellor or the Maréchal de Villeroy." Mazarin, in fact, was King of France; his rooms were crowded with courtiers, who bowed low at his coming and followed him humbly at his going, while the boy, Louis XIV, was left to sleep between sheets full of holes, to wear clothes he had long since grown out of, to pick up what education he pleased, and to be but a shadow beside his great minister. It was in 1661 that he concluded a masterly treaty with Charles of Lorraine, by which Strassburg and several other important towns were to be handed over to France. An illness, which for months past he had been unable to shake off, was increased by political anxiety, and on his return to Paris he sent for Grenaud, the great physician of the day, and even as supplicants had implored the machiavellian Cardinal for mercy, so he in his turn begged Grenaud for just a little

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more life. Two months was all the physician could promise him. At the end of that time, wealth, power, pictures, and palace must all be parted with. The Duc de Brienne met him in his gallery soon after this verdict, a feeble, haggard old man in nightcap and dressing gown. Seizing the Duke's arm, he cried out in a sort of frenzy, "Must I leave all these? Look at that Correggio, this Venus of Titian, this incomparable Deluge of Caracci! And I must leave them, these pictures that have cost me so much, that I love so dearly!" Then a day or two later his mood changed. He had himself shaved, rouged, and dressed, and carried in his litter to the court once more. Grenaud was wrong. The malady was but a passing indisposition after all. A few weeks passed, and he was unable to leave Vincennes, whither he had gone. He could not bear to be dressed or to be taken to his litter. He gave card parties in his room instead. Propped up in a huge bed, he played the cards which someone else held for him, and clutched eagerly at a handful of guineas he won. Finally even cards failed him, the room was cleared of gaming tables for the arrival of the Papal Nuncio, and the great Cardinal, fortified by the last rites of the church, passed away in most perfect peace, leaving the path clear for the absolute rule of Louis XIV.

Leaving the Rue des Petits Champs, we turn to the right up the Rue Richelieu till we come



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to the Square Louvois, which carries us with a bound away from Mazarin, over a century and a half, to the year 1820. On the night of February 13th, the Duc and Duchesse de Berri were at the Opera House, then situated in the Square Louvois. The Duchess wished to leave before the end of the performance, and the Duke, who was filled with admiration for the dancing of Virginie Oreiller, went downstairs to hand his wife into her carriage, waiting at the Rue Rameau entrance, and then return to the royal box. As he stepped on to the pavement, a workman, Louvel, suddenly rushed forward and stabbed him with a knife. In a moment all was confusion; the Duchesse screamed, someone sent a messenger post haste to the Tuilleries, someone else helped to carry the wounded man in at the stage door. Those inside the Opera House knew nothing of what had happened; the orchestra played on; frightened chorus girls in the wings whispered that a man had been killed, and it was to the sound of the ballet music he had loved only too well that the good-natured, scapegrace prince whispered his last injunctions that the Duchesse should spare herself for the sake of their yet unborn child, and that the murderer, Louvel, should be pardoned.

The Rue de Richelieu, that long straight street leading northwards from the Rue St. Honoré to the Boulevards, which still has some fine old eighteenth century houses, has been

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the home at one time or another of many a famous man. Beginning at the northern end, Balzac had a garret at No. 112, not to live in, but as an address for letters, which he found convenient when hard pressed by creditors, as he generally was. This bare, poor-looking room did not hold out much hope to the duns who called there, and the writer of the *Comédie Humaine* was free to continue his work in his home, off the Champs Elysées, or in the suburbs of Passy.

In No. 50 there lived a worthy couple named Poisson, of no great pretensions to wealth, position, or anything, in fact, except comfortable worthiness. On March 19th, 1741, the principal rooms of this house were lit up gaily for wedding festivities. Jeanne Antoinette Poisson, their fifteen-year-old daughter, had been married that day to Charles Guillaume le Normand. It was a very suitable match, just what the Poissons wished for, and no doubt they sat over the fire when the last of the guests had departed, and congratulated each other on the fact that Jeanne Antoinette was so well "settled." What a revelation it would have been to them could they have had the use of Cagliostro's crystal ball for a few minutes, in which to see the scenes of the future! They would have seen the fifteen-year-old girl grown into "La Pompadour," the mature woman enriched with every art and grace that diplomacy could teach, and all taught for one

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purpose, the subjugation of a king. They would have seen her clad in the finest silks that Paris could get for her, costly jewels on her fingers, princes and cardinals bowing low before her, calling her "Madame la Marquise," and straining their wits to evolve fresh compliments to win a smile from the satiated beauty. Yet a third scene might have been put before them. A bored king walking through one of the long galleries of Versailles, and staring absently at the raindrops chasing each other down the window panes. Someone reminds him that it is the day of Madame de Pompadour's funeral. "So it is," said Louis, smothering a yawn, "poor Marquise, she's got a wet day for her journey." However, Cagliostro was not forthcoming with his crystal, and the probability is that as the fire burnt low the old Poissons went quietly off to bed, hoping that ere long they would be able to arrange an equally satisfactory marriage for their son.

No. 40, as we saw in an earlier chapter, was the house to which Molière was carried home from the theatre, a dying man, his drawn face still covered with the grease paint he had used for his make-up in *Le Malade Imaginaire*.

On the opposite side of the street, No. 39, is a relic of imperial generosity. Denis Diderot, the clever talker, the witty writer, the brilliant Encyclopædist, the faithful friend, and entirely unfaithful husband, was always in hot water from some cause or other. At one



[Beauvarlet.

MADAME DU BARRY.



[From a sketch by La Tour.

MME. DE POMPADOUR.



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time he was lodged at Vincennes on account of some indiscreet verses on the court; at another he was in hiding from some infuriated husband in whose house he had brought discord; and as to debt, he was never out of it. His chief love was his library. He clung to that through thick and thin, but at last the time came when that must go too. His troubles were mentioned to the Empress Catherine of Russia, whose admiration for the Encyclopædist was profound. She gave orders at once that the library was to be bought for her, but that owing to the difficulty of transporting it across Europe, she intended to leave it in Paris for the present. In order to house it properly, she bought No. 39 Rue de Richelieu, and as a crowning act of generosity, installed Diderot there as her librarian, at a salary on a par with the rest of her munificence. Freed from all financial difficulties, and protected by such a powerful patroness, the last twenty years of Diderot's life were passed in an ease and comfort which he had never hoped to enjoy.

No. 23 was the home of a man who was as favourably received at Louis XIV's court as Diderot was disapproved of at Louis XV's. Mignard, "the King's first painter," the friend of Louvois, who stepped into Le Brun's shoes when Colbert died, after covering much canvas in reproducing man in "the grand style," as fashion had it then, built himself this fine house on the proceeds of court favour. He was a



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great friend of Molière's, and the latter took refuge many a time from his own domestic jars in the comfortable atmosphere of No. 23, the successful court painter's house.

Now let us turn to the Palais Royal itself. Built by Richelieu for his own residence, it passed, at his death, to Louis XIII; and then to the Cardinal's bitter enemy, Anne of Austria. It was here that she lived with her two boys, Louis XIV and Philip of Orleans, when that Gilbert and Sullivan quarrel, the Fronde, broke out between court and city. It was from the Palais Royal that Mazarin's coup de théâtre, the flight of the court, was carried out. It was on the eve of Twelfth Night, 1649. Anne of Austria, beautiful and calm as ever, played games with the two boys, and cut up a Twelfth Night cake with them before sending them to bed; then, after chatting with her circle as usual, retired for the night herself. At three o'clock in the morning, however, well-cloaked figures might have been seen coming stealthily down the stairs and into the courtyard. They are the Queen with her principal waiting woman, the two children in charge of the valet, Laporte, and three officers of the guard. A coach is waiting at a side door, they get in, and are driven off to the Cours-la-Reine, where a number of other coaches have congregated, Mazarin's, Condé's, and those of the other chief supporters of the party. Cold and sleepy, half-

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dressed, and hardly knowing why or wherefore they have been ordered to be in the Cours-la-Reine at such an unearthly hour, for Mazarin let very few ears hear the whole of his plans, the whole cavalcade falls in behind the Queen's coach, and jolts heavily along through the darkness to St. Germain, where no preparations have been made for them, and most of the court have to repose themselves as best they can on bare boards or bundles of straw. Meantime Paris has awakened in utter consternation to find an empty Palais Royal, and the court gone, no one knows where. Such was the most picturesque incident in the confusing burlesque of a war which lasted, reinforced by lampoons and scurrilous verse, for the best part of four years.

In due time the Palais Royal became the residence of the younger branch of the Bourbons, the Dukes of Orleans. Here it was that the Regent held his debauched court during the minority of Louis XV, when the doings within its walls brought a blush to the cheeks even of those accustomed to the better-veiled scandals of Versailles.

When Louis XVI came to the throne, his cousin, Philip Egalité, reigned at the Palais Royal. This arch-conspirator against the monarchy was busy already assembling the army of gamblers, journalists, democrats, malcontents and scoundrels, with which he succeeded in overthrowing not only the King, but himself as well. In these gardens agitators

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shouted and gesticulated, each surrounded by his own circle, as agitators shout and gesticulate in Hyde Park to-day, only the material they used and the material they worked upon was the most highly inflammable in the world.

It was in these gardens that Camille Desmoulins, the impetuous, unreliable journalist, won his way to fame by inciting the mob to that act of useless folly, the attack on the Bastille. Once more, it is the brilliant verbiage of Carlyle that brings the scene fresh before our eyes. "But see Camille Desmoulins, from the Café de Foy, rushing out, sibylline in face; his hair streaming, in each hand a pistol. He springs to a table: the police satellites are eyeing him; alive they shall not take him, not they alive, him alive. This time he speaks without stammering: Friends! shall we die like hunted hares? Like sheep hounded into their penfold; bleating for mercy where there is no mercy, but only a whetted knife? The hour is come; the supreme hour for Frenchmen and Man; when Oppressors are to try conclusions with Oppressed; and the word is swift Death or Deliverance for ever. Let such hour be welcome! As, meseems, only one cry befits: To Arms! Let universal Paris, universal France, as with the throat of the whirlwind, sound only: To arms!" "To arms!" yell responsive the innumerable voices; like one great voice, as of a demon yelling from the air: for all faces wax fire-eyed: all hearts burn

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up into madness. In such, or fitter words, does Camille evoke the Elemental Powers, in this great moment—"Friends," continues Camille, "some rallying sign! Cockades; green ones—the colour of Hope! As with the flight of locusts, these green tree-leaves; green ribands from the neighbouring shops; all green things are snatched and made cockades of. Camille descends from his table; 'stifled with embraces, wetted with tears': has a bit of green riband handed to him; sticks it in his hat. And now to Curtius' Image-shop there; to the Boulevards; to the four winds, and rest not till France be on fire!"

Camille passed, Philip Egalité passed, swallowed up like so many others in the flames they had fanned. Under Napoleon the gardens and arcades became a fashionable demi-mondaine promenade. Bookshops, restaurants, cafés, gaming houses, jewellers and pawn-brokers' shops were set up cheek by jowl for the benefit of the strollers. The Restoration came, and the Orleans family took possession of their property once more. They lost it finally in 1848, after which Napoleon III gave it to Jerome Buonaparte, once the puppet King of Westphalia. He, too, went his way, and after being nearly burned by Communards, the old Palais Royal of Richelieu, of Anne of Austria, and of the Regent Orleans, settled down to its present state of somewhat dull respectability as the home of the Conseil d'Etat.

## CHAPTER XVII

### TO THE RUE DE LA CHAUSSÉE D'ANTIN

IN walking up the Avenue de l'Opéra, we may notice that near the top it cuts diagonally through the Rue d'Antin. If we walk down the half on the left side of the Avenue we shall find ourselves at No. 3, looking at one of the stepping-stones of Napoleon's career. We have seen him as a boy visiting the Pernons in their house on the Quai Conti: we have seen him as an impecunious young officer lodging cheaply and uncomfortably in the Hôtel Cherbourg; we are going to see him now, still impecunious, but a general in command of the Army of Italy, just about to marry Josephine Beauharnais, the beautiful Creole, who had won his heart. No. 3 Rue d'Antin was then the Mairie of the Second Arrondissement. On March 9th, 1796, at eight in the evening, the registrar, Leclercq, was nodding himself to sleep at his desk; Josephine sat listening, rather anxiously, for Napoleon's footsteps. She was not quite sure yet of the determined little Corsican. There was always a possibility that he might not turn up. Her man of business, Camelet, was anxious, too, and went to the window from time to time.



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Tallien and Barras, having kindly consented to be witnesses at their young protégé's marriage, were talking together about their own affairs, which interested them much more than the question whether their general really would turn up to marry the Citoyenne Beauharnais. Half-past eight struck, then nine, and no bridegroom. Barras and Tallien were vexed at being kept waiting. Josephine and Camelet could hardly conceal their impatience. Half-past nine struck, but the bride would not give up hope. At ten o'clock there were voices downstairs, and a sword clattered against the banisters. He had come at last, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Lemarrois. Without apologising for the delay, he shook the sleeping registrar by the shoulder, bidding him to get to work quickly. In a few minutes the ceremony was over and the documents signed; the witnesses shook hands with the newly-married pair and wished them luck. A carriage with two black horses, once the possession of Louis XVI, was waiting at the door. Napoleon and Josephine got into it and drove off to the Hôtel Chantierine, the house belonging to Madame Talma, the actor's wife, where Josephine had lived for the past six months.

Returning to the Avenue de l'Opéra we will go on our way past the Opéra itself into the Boulevard des Capucines, from which we turn to the right into the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, the abode of many celebrities at one time and



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another. Chopin lived at No. 5. No. 7 is built upon the site of the old Hôtel d'Antin, where the Neckers once lived. Here it was, and in their former home in the Rue de Cléry, that Madame Necker entertained all the literary élite of Paris on Tuesdays and Fridays. D'Alembert, Diderot, Grimm, d'Holbach, Marmontel, Madame Geoffrin, the Abbé Morellet, Buffon, Rousseau, Hume, the Abbé Raynal, the Comte de Guibert, famous now as the lover of Julie de l'Espinasse; everyone, in fact, with the smallest claim to literary celebrity, was made welcome at Necker's hospitable table. Madame Necker, the daughter of a Swiss pastor, who had now quite got over her youthful passion for Gibbon, made an excellent hostess, with the aid of her husband's boundless wealth. Without possessing either the sound common sense of Madame Geoffrin or the acid wit of Madame du Deffand, she was a kindly woman, well-intentioned, and possessed of considerable intellectual abilities. In conversation, however, she was too artificial for brilliance. One of her guests, the Chevalier de Chastellux, arriving a little early, was left alone in the salon for some little while. Noticing a little volume lying on the floor, he picked it up, and came upon pages of Madame Necker's handwriting. The first thing that caught his eye was, "I shall discuss 'La Félicité Publique' and 'Agathé' (two of the Chevalier's own works)



[Appiani.  
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.



[Vigée-Lebrun.  
MARIE ANTOINETTE.



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with the Chevalier de Chastellux. I shall talk about love to Madame d'Angeviller, and must endeavour to promote a literary discussion between M. de Marmontel and M. de Guibert." Madame Necker's conversation was carefully prepared beforehand! Dropping the book where he had found it, the Chevalier awaited events. His hostess came down in few minutes, and at once began with her most spontaneous air to praise "La Félicité Publique," the other guests arrived, and one by one, Madame Necker ticked off her prepared subjects with neat precision, to the intense amusement of the Chevalier.

Her old lover, Gibbon the historian, was a frequent visitor at the Neckers when he was in Paris. Jacques Necker, with complete confidence in his wife, was most friendly and hospitable. Indeed, Gibbon complained bitterly of the husband's indifference. "Could he insult me more cruelly?" he burst out in a letter to his friend, Holroyd. "To ask me every evening to supper; go to bed and leave me alone with his wife—what an impertinent security. It is making an old lover of mighty little consequence!"

Grimm was another famous resident of the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin. This young German, poor and of no particular birth, found his way to Paris about the middle of the eighteenth century, as tutor to the Count de Schomberg's children. He was fond of

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music; he could turn his sentences neatly, Rousseau liked him, but there was nothing to distinguish him from a hundred and one other impecunious young men. Then all of a sudden he sprang into fame. He fell head over ears in love with Mdlle. Fels, an opera singer. She would not even look upon him, and Grimm vowed his heart was broken. He returned home, where, Rousseau says, "A strange malady seized him. He passed his days and nights in a kind of catalepsy, his pulse beating, his eyes open and fixed, not speaking or eating, or moving, appearing sometimes to hear, but never answering, even by a sign, remaining motionless, without pain, without fear, as if he were dead." Rousseau, much distressed, watched over his friend most tenderly for several days; then one morning up he got, dressed as usual, dined and went out without one word of thanks to the astonished Jean Jacques. He had done, whether voluntarily or not, the thing most necessary to a successful career. He had aroused the public curiosity, and become famous. From that day he rose. In 1753 he commenced that voluminous "Correspondence Littéraire," by which the Empress of Russia, the Queen of Sweden, the King of Poland, and many lesser grandees, received all the news of the day at regular intervals in return for a certain fee. They got reviews of books and plays, the details of society gossip, political news, satires, scandals, all safe from

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the severity of the censorship, and the world in general has benefitted too, for Grimm, quite unwittingly, has provided posterity with a mine of accurate details in which every historian of the eighteenth century has dug with more or less success.

No. 42 was the house in which Mirabeau died, and it was from the Rue du Chaussée d'Antin that the long funeral procession which we saw in an earlier chapter, started on its way to the Panthéon.

The great Dumas lived at No. 45. This house and No. 109 Rue de Rivoli, saw the completion of some of his finest work, notably "The Three Musketeers," and "Monte Cristo," which came out as newspaper feuilletons in 1844 and 1845. He was an insatiable worker, and when in the midst of one of his romances the world he created was more real than the world he lived in. The younger Dumas tells how his father would sit down at his desk in the morning, clad in shirt and trousers, the former open at the neck and with sleeves rolled up. Dumas fils, on returning in the evening, would find him still there, with his déjeuner on a tray beside him, untouched and forgotten, while he dined with the Count of Monte Cristo, or uncorked bottle after bottle with d'Artagnan and his friends. One day the young man found his father sunk in his chair, red-eyed and utterly miserable. "Porthos is dead," he said sadly in answer to his son's



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anxious questions. "I've just killed him, and I couldn't help crying over him."

There is another Dumas association in this street. No. 62 was General Foy's house. Readers of the "Memoirs" will remember that it was to the General that Dumas applied as a last hope, on coming to Paris from Villars-Cotteret in search of work. On the strength of his handwriting, so Dumas says, the General got him a humble post as one of the Duke of Orleans's clerks at 1,200 francs per annum, a sum that seemed wealth beyond the dreams of imagination to the impecunious country youth. His is pleasant company to linger in, more especially when so many of our wanderings have been concerned with the realities of bloodshed, instead of romance. But we must leave the good-natured, generous Creole, so conceited that his son declared of him that he was quite capable of jumping up behind his own carriage in order to make people think he kept a black servant, and have a look at the Rue de la Victoires, which crosses the Rue du Chaussée d'Antin.

We left the Rue d'Antin when we had seen Napoleon and Josephine leave the Mairie in that handsome barouche with a pair of black horses, which Josephine had somehow got from the royal stables. They took much the same route that we have done, and probably drove up this same Rue du Chaussée d'Antin and along the Rue de la Victoire, then called

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Chantereine, pulling up in front of a pretty, secluded little villa, which once stood where Nos. 58 and 60 stand to-day. Here it was that the short honeymoon was spent. The next day he went with Josephine to be introduced to his two step-children, Hortense and Eugène Beauharnais, then at school at St. Germain. The day after that, March 11th, a heavy travelling carriage took the place of the royal barouche in front of the little Hôtel Chantereine; Junot and Chauvet, together with plans, maps, valises, and travelling canteens, were already inside it, when Napoleon, lingering to the last moment, reluctantly waved a last farewell to Josephine, and started off on the long journey that was to take him all over Europe and back to the Tuileries, to Elba, to Waterloo, and finally to St. Helena.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### FROM THE LOUVRE WESTWARDS

THERE are few places in which the past is so difficult to recall as the Louvre. There is nothing to be seen of the grim old stronghold of Philip Augustus, or the garden which Charles V had made when he commanded Jean Calow and Geoffroy le Febre to plant squares of strawberries, hyssop, sage, lavender, balsams and violets; to make fair paths, to carry away all manner of filth, and to endeavour to obtain lilies, double red roses and other rare herbs. The scenes between Catherine de Medici and her sons, between Anne of Austria and Richelieu, the secret passages and the oubliettes (if they ever existed) are so lost in the long galleries of the modern Louvre, that we will only mention one incident, and that a particularly dramatic one—the eve of St. Bartholomew as described by Marguerite de Valois. “I was sound asleep,” she writes, “when suddenly there was a great knocking and kicking on the door, and a man’s voice cried, ‘Navarre! Navarre!’ My old nurse, thinking it might be the king, my husband, ran to open the door, when in staggered a gentleman, M. de Néjan by name, who had a

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sword cut on the shoulder, a halberd wound in the arm, and was still pursued by four archers, who rushed after him into my bedroom. He, hoping for safety, flung himself on to my bed. I, fearing the archers would seize me too, threw myself out, into the shelter of the ruelle, whither he followed me, flinging his arms round my waist. We both screamed loudly, and which of the two was the more terrified I hardly know. Thank God, M. de Nançai, Captain of the Guard, came up and took compassion on us, though he could not refrain from fits of laughter when he saw our position."

We saw the stone for the Tuileries brought from the Vaugirard quarries to the river's edge by way of the Rue de Bac, and we saw how Catherine de Medici turned with deeper interest to her new Hôtel de la Reine, further away from the fateful tower of St. Germain l'Auxerrois. In any case, the Tuileries was rather an unnecessary palace, and up to the days of the Revolution it was rarely used as a royal residence. On the 6th of October, 1789, Louis XVI and his family were brought here perforce from Versailles. It was from here that they set off for Varennes on the 20th of June, 1791, on that most fatal of escapades carried out with the indecision and failure to grasp a situation which usually marked the actions of Louis XVI. It was to the Tuileries that they were brought back ignominiously on

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June 25th, on the evening of which, the Queen's waiting woman noticed with a gasp of amazement as she let down her mistress's hair that it had turned quite white.

It was from the Tuileries that they fled again before the invading mob on August 10th, 1792, walking across the gardens to the Salle de Manége (its site is marked by a tablet on the wall in the Rue de Rivoli, opposite the Rue Castiglione), the little Dauphin kicking the leaves on the ground as he went, while the mob jeered from the other side of the railings, there to remain for long hours in charge of the Legislative Assembly, shut up in the stifling atmosphere of the reporter's box, till they could be lodged in that dreary prison, the Temple. For the scene which followed that last fatal move, prompted once more by indecision, the massacre of the Swiss Guards, it is impossible to do better than dip again into the pages of Carlyle, irritating though his declamatory fire-works and exclamation marks may be at times.

With the passing of the Revolution and the coming of the Empire, a new radiance shone on the salons of the Tuileries; somewhat tawdry, no doubt, to those who had seen the brilliance of the old régime, but infinitely better than the chaos of those nightmare years of revolution. Kings came and kings went. Accessions and depositions succeeded each other until September 5th, 1870, when the

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last royalty, the Empress Eugénie, hurried through the long galleries of the Louvre to the entrance opposite St. Germain l'Auxerrois, where she and her lady-in-waiting got into a cab, leaving the Tuileries for ever. On the night of May 24th of the following year, clouds of smoke hung over Paris, and the air was reeking with the smell of petroleum. The Tuileries, as well as the Hôtel de Ville and many other buildings, were enveloped in flames. By morning nothing was left of Catherine de Medici's palace but a vast pile of black, smoking ruins.

As in the Louvre, so in the Place de la Concorde, it is difficult to summon up at will the scenes of a past age. On a bright autumn day, when the sunshine lights up the granite basins of the fountains, the golden tints of the trees in the Tuileries gardens, the long façade of the Ministry of Marine, and the ever-flowing stream of taxis, carriages, cabs and luxurious private cars, there is but little to recall that nearly three thousand people looked their last upon the sunshine here.

In the middle of the eighteenth century, Louis XV, no longer the Bien-Aimé, gave permission to the city of Paris to erect a fine equestrian statue to himself on the waste ground at the end of the Tuileries Gardens. It was done, and the inhabitants made many a bitter jest over it. "Il est ici comme à Versailles," they said, "il est sans cœur et



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sans entrailles." It was strange that it should be just on this spot that Nemesis should fall upon the children for the sins of their fathers. In 1792 the horse and its rider were overthrown, and the famous statue of Liberty took their place. Close beside Liberty, speedily appeared the wooden framework of the instrument that, in the name of Liberty, should serve the behests of such a group of tyrants as France had never seen before.

Those two buildings, the Ministry of Marine and the Hôtel du Coislin, separated by the Rue Royale, were the last sights to greet the eyes of thousands. Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Madame Elizabeth, Philip Egalité, Charlotte Corday, Madame Roland, Camille Desmoulins and his wife, Hébert, Brissot, Madame du Barry, Robespierre, Couthon, all mounted the same scaffold in the Place de la Concorde. Shopkeepers, servants, dentists, lawyers, sailors, soldiers, artists, hairdressers, priests and nuns, a vast crowd of the noble and the ignoble, the brave and the timid, the worldly and the spiritual, mingled their blood with the ground on which we stand to-day. The jolting tumbril, the guards, the crowd, the houses at the end of Rue St. Honoré, then the open space, the ground so caked and reeking with blood that horses and oxen could hardly be got to cross it, the guillotine beneath the statue of Liberty, where Sanson and his two assistants waited with their bloodstained sleeves rolled

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up to the shoulder, the acute suppressed emotion of the last few seconds, the glimpse of the trees and avenues of the Champs Élysées, the horrible stickiness of the guillotine lunette, the faces of the crowd below, and then—the quick, sharp finish. Of all those surcharged emotions, the agony, the exaltation, the nervous terror, or the numb indifference, nothing is left in the Place de la Concorde to-day. Perhaps it is as well.

Turning to the right past the Ministry of Marine and up the Rue Royal, we reach the aristocratic Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, that long street leading far away westwards in the Neuilly direction. Here is the fine old Hôtel de Charost, now the British Embassy. Just beyond it stood Madame de Sabran's house. Here it was that she and the Chevalier de Bouffleurs passed many a happy hour, sitting in one of those long eighteenth century rooms decorated with the wonderful panelling and mouldings which distinguished the lavish days before the Revolution. The huge garden, with its fruit trees, its terraces and smooth lawns, was a veritable paradise of shade and coolness when the hot summer sun blazed down upon the narrow unsavoury streets. But the story of that idyllic period, of the red chaos that succeeded it, and the peaceful climax which the fates held in store for this pair of devoted lovers, has been ably told already, and the reader who would know more

## FROM THE LOUVRE WESTWARDS

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of the life in the Faubourg St. Honoré must turn to Nesta Webster's well-written book, "The Chevalier de Bouffleurs."

Next to Madame de Sabran's house (not a trace of which is left to-day) was the Hôtel d'Evreux, built in the wild days of the Regency. Madame de Pompadour made it her home when not at Versailles. Louis XVI made a present of it to the Duchesse de Bourbon, who called it the Elysée-Bourbon. Confiscated during the Revolution, Murat lived here for a time, then the great Napoleon. Another Buonaparte, Louis, afterwards the King of Holland, had it for a town residence when Napoleon moved his court to the Tuileries. Napoleon III occupied it during his presidency, and had it enlarged and altered as well. Finally it became the Palais de l'Elysée as we see it to-day, the official residence of the President.

Far up the street is a turning to the left, the Rue de Balzac, once the Allée Fortunée. Just at the corner a tablet in a garden wall tells us that this was the site of Balzac's house, the house in which he hoped to spend many years of happiness with Madame Hanska as his wife. Neither years nor happiness were to be his. Death claimed him a few months after the marriage, and of happiness he found but little in the Allée Fortunée. We saw in the Rue de Richelieu the room which was consecrated to bills and creditors. Now we

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can see him at work. After a wild burst of luxurious extravagance, the novelist would settle down to an equally wild burst of work. His very dress indicated the change. Instead of the man of the world in blue coat and gilt buttons, he became a cloistered monk, clad in a loose white robe, girdled with a cord. Shut in his room, he would draw the curtains to exclude all daylight. He sat at a table lit by green-shaded candles. No one entered except his servant, who brought his food, and took away those endless corrected proofs to the printer. By two in the morning Balzac would be at work, at six he would have his bath and his coffee, at seven he would be at his desk again. Another hour at midday sufficed for his lunch, then at six in the evening he would put up his papers, dine simply, and go to bed.

Dumas, when he wrote, worked away at white heat, never resting, never correcting, never re-reading. As soon as he reached the bottom of the sheet it was done with. Balzac, on the contrary, could never rest until he had found the exact word he wanted. Every sentence must be hammered into shape until it pleased his fastidious taste. The first copy was a mere skeleton, full of mistakes, and with no attempt at style. Off it went to the printers, to be returned in small sections, each one pasted in the centre of a large sheet. Then Balzac got to work once more; the wide borders

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were quickly filled with lines and dashes, with crossings-out and insertions, a perfect maze of ink which the printers had to tread as best they could. Back came the corrected proofs in the same form. Once more the margins were filled with corrections and returned to the printers. Again and again the process was repeated. Time and again the conscientious artist would go through his work. Then at last the maddened, harassed typesetters would breathe a sigh of relief as the last sheet came in marked "bon à tirer," and Balzac, in his darkened work-room, would breathe another sigh of relief, fling off the monk's robe, draw back the curtains, and become a man of the world once more.

The Rue de Balzac brings us out close to the Elysée Palace Hotel. We turn towards the river down the broad, uninteresting Avenue de l'Alma, and soon find ourselves at the Place de l'Alma, the termination of the Course la-Reine.

In the seventeenth century, those great days of the French monarchy and nobility, there was no more fashionable spot in Paris than the Cours-la-Reine. Picture three splendid avenues of trees, with the Seine on one side and the woods and meadows on the other. Picture also a wide circle in the centre, a handsome gateway at either end, and you have the promenade which the French nobility owed to Marie de Medici. Present in imagina-



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tion on some warm May evening in the year, say 1645, when the trees are still in their fresh spring foliage and the meadows are gay with buttercups; we see the world of Mazarin, of Madame de Sévigné, of the Frondeurs pass before us. We see the Duchesses de Longueville and de Chevreuse, in the height of their beauty, driving out from Paris in wonderful open carriages, with painted panels and upholstery of blue or crimson silk. Young gallants on showy horses with embroidered saddle-cloths prance and caracole beside the ladies, putting their horses through all the paces of the riding school, and showing off, at the same time, their own fine lovelocks and handsome clothes. Madame de Rambouillet comes out to take the air in the cool of the evening, leaning languidly back on her cushions as she listens to the young Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who sits beside her talking of life and love. Mazarin, the successor of the great Richelieu, drives slowly along one of the avenues, seeing all while he appears to see nothing. Gondi, the Coadjutor, still of no particular fame, receives no great attention as he rides along a side path, for no one yet knows what schemes and plots are surging and seething in his mind. La Grande Mademoiselle untroubled as yet by thoughts of Lauzun, joins the stream of carriages. She is a mere girl still, tall and graceful, and evidently enjoys the sensation her arrival produces as all



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other carriages make way for her to pass. Backwards and forwards goes the stream. Greetings are exchanged, a low bow and flourish of a plumed hat answers a smile from a pair of dark eyes; laughter, pleasure, and enjoyment are in the air. At last the sun goes down behind the heights of Chaillot, the carriages turn back towards the city, and the gay world goes to sup, to the opera, to talk, to discuss until another day begins another round of gaiety.

Now let us visit the same scene on October 5th, 1789, a hundred and forty-four years later. It is a wet, drizzling morning instead of a lovely evening of spring. There is a procession in the Cours-la-Reine again, but it is a parody of the procession we saw before. Working men, fish-wives, beggars, National Guards, paid agitators with Théroigne de Méricourt much in evidence, resplendent in a scarlet riding habit and black hat, mounted on a black horse belonging to the Duke of Orleans, and escorted by one of the Duke's jockeys. Lafayette, nominally the leader, in his cornflower-blue uniform, mounted on his famous white charger, rides along in silence. He does not like the business, and would gladly have avoided it if he could. Instead of the easy interchange of wit from one to another of Louis XIV's aristocracy, there are tears and curses, filthy jokes, and inflammatory speeches from the wretched dregs of Louis

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XVI's people. Why they are going down the Cours-la-Reine many of them hardly know. The agitators tell them they are going to Versailles to get bread. The agitators themselves have been told that if the Château were rushed, and the King and Queen murdered, there would be big rewards and plunder unlimited. So the procession winds along through the Cours-la-Reine out into the country on that ten mile march to Versailles so fraught with tragedy for the whole of France.

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So, like those two pictures of the Cours-la-Reine, the pageant of Paris passes before us: splendour in one century, squalor in the next, as one cycle of history succeeds another. We have now walked through the greater part of old Paris, through streets of fine old houses and streets of dull, uninteresting tenements, and now, on the banks of the Seine, under the trees, we must finish our walks. Needless to say, much has been left out, for this drama of Paris has scenes enough to fill many a volume, but if the author has succeeded in fanning the sparks of romance, which still linger in the narrow, unsavoury streets of the old city, into a flame, or in taking away some of the dulness of modern shops and dwellings, she will offer that as an excuse for adding yet another book

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to the pile that Paris has inspired. If the attempt is unsuccessful, then she can only plead that these pages have given her many hours of interest, delving into that most fascinating subject, the Romance of the Paris Streets.

THE END









